The Dissertation Committee for Joni Henry Noble certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE: THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, LIFE AND TEACHING HISTORIES OF THREE K-12 ART EDUCATORS LOCATED IN NORTH LOUISIANA AND CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI

Committee:

_____
Sherry L. Field, Supervisor

_____
Lisa J. Cary

_____
J. Ulbricht

_____
Paul E. Bolin

_____
Elaine D. Fowler

PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE: THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, LIFE AND TEACHING HISTORIES OF THREE K-12 ART EDUCATORS LOCATED IN NORTH LOUISIANA AND CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI

By

Joni Henry Noble, B.F.A.; M.F.A.

Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

December 2009

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my children, Laura Louise Noble and Jack Henry Noble, who are the lights of my life, and without whose continued support, inspiration and belief I would never have had the audacity to undertake such an enormous venture.

Acknowledgements

The only thing that saved me was art.

-Joni Henry Noble, February 28, 2009

When I began this journey six years ago, I fully expected to be finished with this dissertation in about three years. I could not have anticipated the numerous twists and turns my life has taken since 2003. Little did I understand at the time how many obstacles would be thrown in my path. So many people – friends and family – asked during the first few years, "So, when will you finish your degree?" For the past three years, those inquiries have dwindled, probably out of a sense of social decorum, attempting to be polite, thinking to themselves that I'd most likely given up and would never finish. A few have, however, continued to support throughout this long journey, and to those people I owe a great deal of thanks.

First and foremost, I must acknowledge my children, Laura and Jack Henry, and my parents, Ed and JoAnn Henry. They are the rocks on which my entire foundation is built. Ron, my former department head in the art department at NLU, believed in me and encouraged me to pursue the doctorate. Bob, a dear friend, and the former Associate Dean of Business at NLU, wrote so many letters of recommendation for me, he continues to keep a few copies around just in case I call for another. David and George, two more wonderful friends, both told me they'd kick my butt if I didn't finish this thing. Dr. J. Ulbricht and Dr. Sherry Field, my mentors at The University of Texas at Austin, were always cheerfully present if I had any questions or concerns. Marilou, my painting buddy, who listened to all of my complaints and irritations on a weekly basis, was a

constant reminder to stay grounded in the things I really care about, while together we produced painted canvas after canvas at her home studio.

Throughout this notably frustrating process, I must acknowledge that the time I spent painting with Marilou, relieved a great deal of tension in my world. In addition, I was reminded on more than one occasion by my dear friend Matt, that the completion of a dissertation required the assistance of a higher power. As a result, daily prayer and meditation aided in maintaining that connection to spirit that allowed me to finally complete this monumental task.

My mantra during my first stint in graduate school was always, as Bill Murray chanted in the movie, *Meatballs*, "It just doesn't matter." That was a long time ago. I was much younger, and I wasn't inclined to take anything too seriously. Now, twenty years later, as I've moved through this dissertation process, I've discovered that, in reality, some things really do matter.

PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE: THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, LIFE AND TEACHING HISTORIES OF THREE K-12 ART EDUCATORS LOCATED IN NORTH LOUISIANA AND CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI

Publication No. _____

Joni Henry Noble, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2009

Supervisor: Sherry L. Field

The purpose of this study is to examine self-perceived changes that occur over the course of the careers of three K-12 art educators located in north Louisiana and central Mississippi. Designed as a case study, this research focuses on the perceptions of three art educators with regard to perceived changes in their classrooms over the course of their teaching careers. Art teachers were chosen not only because of the researcher's background in the arts, but also because of the art educator's apparent under-representation in the body of academic research. The three art educators who were participants in this study were also chosen because of their many years of service in the field. Each has been teaching for 27 years or more in north Louisiana and central Mississippi.

Included is a brief review of the researcher's teaching history and educational background in order to establish positionality, which also lends a degree of validity to the

research (Villenas, 1996). In addition, this positionality serves to illuminate the researcher's epistemological perspectives and her personal ways of knowing as an art teacher (Cary, 2006).

Each teacher's story was divided into a life history, a teaching history, teaching today, and significant perceived changes. Each story was accomplished through multiple taped interviews, document mining, maintaining a researcher's journal, and member checking.

A synopsis was developed of the common themes that coalesce each of the teachers' lived experiences, as well as common significant changes that each has perceived over the course of their careers. Many changes were noted by each of the art teachers. The most noted changes were found in the areas of technology, the students themselves, parental involvement, peers, and the discipline of art.

Implications for future research are suggested including: (a) more case studies of other art teachers, including more art teachers in north Louisiana and central Mississippi; (b) further development of the researcher's journal associated with this study; (c) and a study of some former students of each of these educators and the impact that these teachers have had on their lives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Day after day up there beating my wings

With all of the softness truth requires

I feel them shrug whenever I pause:

They class my voice among tentative things,

…I communicate right; but explain to the dean –

Well, Right has a long and intricate name.

And the saying of it is a lonely thing.

--William Stafford (1962)

Many teachers' experiences are left undocumented and forgotten. For some teachers, the classroom remains an autonomous and rather lonely place, a space of separation from peers and colleagues. This study initially acknowledged that the lives of teachers as they work in the classroom and as they quietly go about their daily routine, are seldom noted or acknowledged by the general public.

Changes will also inevitably occur during a teaching career. Teachers learn and experience, and then, either grow or diminish pedagogically, depending on their individual situations. Teachers may perceive changes in students, peers, administrators, the curriculum, professional development activities, attitudes toward their own art-making, and/or teaching strategies, to name a few. Some of these specific changes have the potential to eventually lead to a more general transformation in teaching philosophy

or even a transformation of the general curriculum. Sometimes these changes are subtle, and sometimes they are dramatic. Epiphanies about teaching or dramatic changes in philosophies are seldom documented or even acknowledged by classroom teachers. Indeed, many teachers go through years of teaching making significant improvements in their classroom without even recognizing those changes themselves. While the research community has addressed the general teaching experience extensively -- particularly the first year of teaching -- few art teachers have been studied longitudinally. Some studies have addressed the art teaching experience, however.

Degge (1975) examined the relationship between an art teacher and her students over a lengthy period of time, concluding that many art teachers' goals and objectives in the classroom do not coincide with the actual lesson being presented. Efland (1990) also concluded that while qualitative research in art education is the most widely adopted methodology for inquiry in the field, the research being conducted has had little impact on art teaching itself. He reiterated that, while art teachers may not be cognizant of current research in their field, evaluators of instruction and researchers of art education have benefited a great deal from current research trends. Efland also contended that the nature of art education is, "complicated by the inherently ambiguous nature of its subject matter, where right or wrong answers are not readily forthcoming" (1990, p. 251).

It was this researcher's intent to clarify and illuminate these ambiguities in the art teaching experiences of two north Louisiana educators and one central Mississippi educator, with particular emphasis on changes that have occurred in the past 30 years.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to examine self-perceived changes that have occurred over the course of the careers of three K-12 art educators located in north Louisiana and central Mississippi. Designed as a case study, this research focused on the perceptions of three art educators with regard to perceived changes in their classrooms over the course of their teaching careers. Art teachers were chosen not only because of this researcher's history in the arts, but also because of the art educator's apparent under-representation in the body of academic research. Included is a brief review of the researcher's teaching history and educational background in order to establish positionality, which will also lend a degree of validity to the research (Villenas, 1996). In addition, this personal history serves to illuminate the researcher's epistemological perspectives, and personal ways of knowing as an art teacher (Cary, 2006).

Positionality

My educational background has always been associated with the arts. When people ask me how long I have been interested in art, my typical response is, "since I was in kindergarten." The art classroom was the place where I found a level of confidence that was missing for me at a social level. I was a straight A student, but my father's vocation required that the family move often, and I was never able to establish a secure social structure at school for any length of time. As a result, I became an introverted child who was constantly seeking that place of stability.

Many of my first memories of school were the teachers' responses to my artwork. My kindergarten teacher in Kansas City, Missouri, acknowledged certain drawings that I would compose, and she often displayed them in the classroom. My third grade teacher

in San Antonio, Texas, recognized me as "an artist" publicly to my classmates. I won the mask-making contest in fifth grade with a three-dimensional composition – a construction type for which none of the other students had given consideration. A ninth grade math teacher in Louisiana gave an assignment for students to complete a poster design using all geometric shapes. I complied, but ever the creative thinker, I wove my design using multi-colored threads, and gained instant recognition from the math department as a creative and innovative thinker. This drive to surpass my classmates in the arts also, unfortunately, served to alienate some of my peers. I gained such positive feedback from faculty, however, that the peer recognition became less essential to my self esteem as an artist and learner.

I was accepted into the newly formed high school art program in Bastrop, Louisiana, and I immediately excelled in that setting. The first participant in this study, John, was the art teacher at Bastrop High School. He almost immediately became a very influential person in my life. I became an assistant to the art teacher my first year. I was so recognized at the school for my artwork, that the guidance counselors allowed me the luxury of taking extra art classes in lieu of other options in the curriculum. In my first art exhibition, during my junior year at Bastrop High School, my work was chosen for a second place prize. The judges were art professors from Northeast Louisiana University, in nearby Monroe. The drawing that won is marked in the photograph (1.1) below with a red ribbon.

Photograph 1.1

I also won the Louisiana state division of a national art contest my junior year which was sponsored by the U.S. Postal Service and was called "Hire the Vet." My design was placed on brochures printed by the federal government and distributed in every post office in the country. I won $175 from the "Hire the Vet" contest, which was the first monetary award I ever received for my work. One of the senior celebrations at the high school just before graduation was a list, compiled by the student body, of predictors for the graduating class. My classmates fabricated a prediction that one day I would become a famous artist and my work would be exhibited in international art museums. Of course, that did not happen, but it was a significant motivator for a shy, introverted student.

I received some accolades after I entered the fine arts program at Northeast Louisiana University as well. While during the first two college years I felt slightly confused and undecided, I eventually found my self-discipline again and focused on the art degree. I was given the "Artist of the Year" award by the faculty, and I received foundation scholarships based on artistic excellence in order to continue my education.

Once more, I was reinforced for my artistic endeavors, primarily through well-intended art teachers.

With the exception of the first two years of college, I have always considered myself a self-made, devoted student. But in reviewing my history for this study, I have come to the realization that many of the teachers I had along the way had a tremendous impact on the art teacher and researcher I eventually became. As a result, this study of art teachers has completed a symbolic full-circle for me. I have been exposed to some very gifted teachers, as well as some who were less than motivating. I have always been involved with education at one level or another. Now, I'm an art teacher myself.

Early Teaching

I began my teaching career, very informally, as a private art instructor for gifted students. I taught these students out of my home studio; and it was a very rewarding experience. I also taught arts workshops at a local museum during the summer. The age range of my students was from 4 to adult. I gained valuable teaching experience through working with such diverse age groups. I also began to subconsciously establish a preference for the adult learner, although working with children at the time was very satisfying as well.

Eventually I received a part-time adjunct position at the local university teaching art appreciation courses. My first day of class, I walked into the classroom with what I thought were an abundance of notes and slides. I either lectured at an incredibly rapid, probably incoherent pace, or I had not prepared nearly enough material. In any case, I completed my entire lecture in fifteen minutes, looked at my watch, looked at the class,

and then dismissed them. The students were thrilled and probably left the classroom still trying to figure out what I had just said. I was, of course, mortified that I had not been well-prepared. I went to my office and got back to work. The next day was an improvement, and I continued to make what I perceived as positive changes in my classroom following the first-day fiasco.

Teaching Today

This part-time position evolved into a full-time adjunct position, and subsequently I was given a tenure-track assistant professor position. I was asked to assume the duties of the art education professor when our Ph.D. was offered the department head at another university. I spent the summer auditing courses from the outgoing professor and reading textbooks, furiously trying to educate myself on everything about art education. I had never previously taken an art education course. I felt totally lost and inept. Once again, I was forced to make teaching adjustments and changes in my classroom. But I learned a great deal in the process. And throughout all of my teaching history, above all else, I have been a student who was excited about gaining new knowledge.

I learned many things about the teaching profession itself, as well. A professor/colleague once told me when I first began my teaching career at the college level that I could not allow myself to become friends with my students. He went on to tell me about several debacles he had experienced because he had socialized with his students. Never again would he make that mistake, and he advised me that I, as a new teacher, should be very cautious about repeating his mistakes. I often wondered about his statements because, while I did not totally disagree with him, I thought his thoughts were

born out of a certain paranoia and downright fear of his students. I have struggled with this dilemma throughout my teaching career. Why do some teachers, sometimes unknowingly, perpetuate alienation of students in the classroom? Is there always an adversarial relationship between teachers and administrators, and teachers and students? With many teachers, their greatest fear is a live encounter with a curious student. Since my colleague's comments so many years ago, I did learn that it was probably not a good idea to socialize with my students on a regular basis. I've also tried, with time, to encourage my students to question me, and I do consider some of them my friends. In fact, I'm proud to have their friendship. I've attempted to battle the traditional fears. As Parker Palmer (1998) wrote, "If we want to develop and deepen the capacity for connectedness at the heart of good teaching, we must understand, and resist, the perverse but powerful draw of the "disconnected" life" (p. 36). Palmer also stated, "…we must deal with the fear that makes us not porous but impervious, that shuts down our capacity for connectedness and destroys our ability to teach and learn" (p. 40). As for me, I'm still learning everyday.

My positionality is one of researcher and art educator. As a researcher, I always want to learn more. This study relates to my current position as doctoral candidate/researcher, but it also relates to my concurrent life as artist/educator. My teachers, particularly my art teachers, have always been very important mentors. Unlike some students I've encountered, I've always had the greatest respect and admiration for the teachers in my life. Because of the value I place on the art education profession, I feel this study is something I've been intrinsically qualified and ultimately "called" to

conduct. I've spent a lifetime immersed in the study of art education, and now I've put it in writing.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The following question serves as guidance for the collection of qualitative data for this study:

What are the perceptions of change of three K-12 Louisiana and Mississippi art educators regarding their development as art teachers over the course of their careers?

In this dissertation, the life histories and classroom experiences of three art teachers were studied. More specifically, this research addresses the selected teachers' perceptions of change in their classrooms over the course of their careers. In previous research, relatively few studies related specifically to art educators have been conducted, while the case studies and life histories of general educators are plentiful. Sherry Klein (Ed., 2003) referred to this lack of literature in the area of art education case studies in her introduction to *Teaching Art in Context.* Research has been conducted involving art educators who are practicing throughout the country, but few who are practicing in Mississippi and Louisiana.

The primary focus of this study was to reveal how these teachers' lived experiences and perceived changes in the art classroom have transitioned over the course of their careers. Volumes of studies have also been conducted on the general educator's first-year teaching experience. While the first year of teaching is reviewed briefly, this study was primarily concerned with the ways in which the art classroom has changed

over time. The three art educators selected for this study are all veterans in the field. All of the participants have been teaching art for 27 or more years. One of the teachers selected has taught in the public school system in north Louisiana for 33 years, and has recently retired.

GOALS OF THE STUDY

The goals of this study were multifaceted. The primary goal was to make a significant contribution to the greater body of research in the field of art education. In addition, this study has provided tangible data to other art teachers in the field striving to improve their level of pedagogy; has provided equally valuable insights into the art teaching experience to preservice art education programs; and has aided in garnering further recognition, respect and support for the discipline of art education. Through a personal involvement with art teacher preparation and research, this researcher feels a great responsibility to highlight an understanding of the art teaching experience in order to better serve future educators of art. This can be most effectively accomplished through more developed and extensive art education research. Within the field of art education, "Day (1997) and others (for example; Beudert, 2006; Galbraith, 2001; Galbraith & Grauer, 2004; Hutchens, 1997; Sabol, 2004; Thurber, 2004; Zimmerman, 1997, 2004) have called for increased research into teacher preparation and practice in order to understand current practice, to recognize what is working well, and to determine directions for necessary changes" (Henry & Lazzari, 2007).

Two studies that highlighted this transition in the art classroom and some dramatic changes in the teaching environment over the past forty years are, *The Flower*

Teachers: Stories for a New Generation, by Candace Jesse Stout (2002), and *Women Art Educators V: Conversations Across Time, Remembering, Revisioning, Reconsidering*, edited by Kit Grauer, Rita Irwin, and Enid Zimmerman (2003). Each of these volumes, among others, offers a strong foundation for this study and were more fully explained in the literature review found in Chapter 2.

While the research methodology was reviewed in detail in Chapter 3, a brief introduction is included here. Qualitative data for this study was collected through informal interviews with each classroom teacher which included oral histories, and document mining in the form of past and present photographs of the teacher as well as other historical data including both old and new lesson plans, yearbooks, and other curricular documents. The researcher functioned as an observer/interpreter, documenting field notes with one or more of the following: a laptop computer; the researcher's journal; audio recording equipment; and a digital camera for reproduction of documents and historical data. The teaching and life histories of the three art educators were validated by the utilization of document mining and oral histories.

Document mining and oral history are useful methodologies for glimpsing into teachers' lives and practice. Stout (2002) included early or first-year teaching photographs of each educator, as well as near-retirement photographs of each in her research. Mitchell and Weber (1999) wrote an extensive essay on the use of photographs in the research of schools. They noted, "The value of the single photograph lies in its potential to help uncover layers of meaning" (Mitchell and Weber, 1999). Anderson (2000) also included photographs of the art educators in his study titled *Real Lives: Art Teachers and the Cultures of Schools*. The use of photographs in this study offered a

degree of credibility and an authenticity to the classroom experiences of the participants that no other medium could equal (Grovesnor, 1999).

In addition to the inclusion of photographs in the study, each participant contributed autobiographical information (Grauer, Irwin and Zimmerman, 2003) through oral histories which were recorded by the researcher. Raunft (2001) also noted that teaching histories and changes in the classroom can become more clarified through the use of reflection and oral histories by the educator. Raunft's (2001) text is a compilation of autobiographical essays by many of the most widely recognized international art educators. Many of these well-respected teachers and researchers revealed their perceptions of changes in the art classroom over the span of the entire 20th century and beyond.

Each participant was asked to contribute an oral, reflective summary of their teaching career. The perceptions of teachers' experiences are important to their overall pedagogical situation. The teachers themselves seemed to benefit from this reflective exercise, and the greater body of art education research has been augmented, as well. In addition, oral history was effective during the course of this study by enlightening the biographical and autobiographical segments of this case study. Each teacher was asked to member check (Stake, 1995) their transcript. Careful consideration of possible problems associated with oral histories was addressed and was elaborated upon in Chapter 3 (Mertens, 2005, p. 285-288). These reflections also provided a degree of triangulation for this study (Sevigny, 1978).

Reflective notes were written by the researcher immediately following each interview, and all interviews were recorded and transcribed for further analysis. Validity

and reliability were achieved through the use of triangulation of data (Merriam, 1998) which included member-checking, multiple interviews, document mining (Stake, 1995), and a periodic review of the research by committee members. Final documentation of the research for the case study and data analysis was presented in narrative text in Chapters 4 and 5.

The researcher acknowledges that this research was a qualitative case study, conducted under the auspices of the interpretive paradigm. As such, the study itself evolved as it progressed. The current research was a starting point for an ongoing and changing investigative process (Mertens, 2005). Because this research was both constructivistic and interpretive, it was guided by the idea that knowledge is socially constructed by learners and researchers, and that it is the researcher's mission to enhance and broaden the larger body of knowledge through investigations into the lives of the participants (Mertens, 2005). It is further acknowledged that additional research questions may evolve both during and subsequently to the culmination of this study.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was limited by the following concerns:

1. The study was limited by the amount of information the participants were able to accurately recall from the beginning of their careers. All of the participants have been teaching for 27 or more years, and understandably may not possess perfect recall of some facts. Also, the study was limited by the honesty of the participants. As reviewed in Chapter 3, one of the operative words in the title of this study is "perceptions" which implies the subjects' interpretations of data.

2. Some of the teachers studied may have felt that their teaching strategies or behavior were in question by this study. In particular, some of the questions that addressed a teacher's professional development activities, and their knowledge of more contemporary issues may have seemed threatening to some of the educators. It was the researcher's goal to assure each subject that their pedagogical expertise was not the primary focus of this study. The goal of the study was to document changes in the classroom, and to analyze those changes as thoroughly as possible without prejudice.

3. The researcher acknowledges that the nature of the questions asked of each participant may have been limiting to the quality of data that was collected. The questions that were asked were based on documented questionnaires found in Appendices A, B, and C, attached to this dissertation. In addition, modifications were made to these questionnaires by the researcher.

4. This study was limited by the accurate collection, assimilation, and analysis of the data collected by the researcher.

5. This research was a case study of three unique teachers. The data collected in this research cannot be generalized to application on a broad scale.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Some basic terminology used extensively in this study, should be defined at this time.

Community-based Art Education (CBAE): An approach to art education in which meaning is "derived from local experiences, traditions, and beliefs" (Keifer-Boyd, 2000). A method of teaching art as it relates to the local culture. Community-based Art

Education can be both formally and informally delivered. Some view CBAE as service projects, and others consider CBAE public art itself (Ulbricht, 2005).

Discipline-based Art Education (DBAE): A curriculum model adopted by virtually every state in the union that organizes an art curriculum around the four central disciplines of studio production, aesthetics, art criticism, and art history (Smith, 1996). This model was developed by The Getty Center in the 1980s (Uhrmacher & Matthews, 2005).

Guerilla tactics: Decisive, serious, and swift action called for in resolving an issue (Weitz & Suggs, 2000).

Multiculturalism: "Multicultural art education can enable students from various backgrounds to generate ideas and symbols that reflect their own cultural beliefs, experiences, and environments (Anderson, 1991)." In other words, an effective multicultural curriculum should possess a relevant, personal, social and community context.

Positionality: A way of establishing the researcher's point-of-view in a qualitative case study. Positionality can be established through autobiographical information (Lincoln, 1995, as cited in Mertens, 2005).

Postmodernism: A theory in art education that "makes us aware that art concepts are contestable and unstable and, because of this, art educators need to vigilantly examine and re-examine what is meant by, to use Gardner's terms (1999), truth, beauty, and goodness" (Emery, 2002). Key postmodern orientations in art are: (a) the individual in context; (b) pluralism; (c) art for meaning; (d) multiculturalism; (e) high art and low art; (f) viewers as critics; (g) art knowledge as non-linear; (h) gender; (i) skepticism and postmodern doubt (Emery, 2002); deconstruction; and (j) hyperreality (Hurwitz & Day, 2001).

Reflection: Oral histories are generally collected through taped interviews of the respondents. The purpose is to establish a time-line of how events have unfolded over time. Focus is placed on past events (Mertens, 2005). Reflection (reflective writing): "Turning a subject over in the mind and giving it serious and consecutive consideration" (Dewey, 1933, p. 3). Reflective writing and/or reflection is an exercise that brings a level of expertise in qualitative data analysis (Stake, 1995). It is a process by which the researcher mentally organizes and assimilates data and then draws certain conclusions based on that data. Reflection can be oral or written.

Visual culture studies (Visual Culture Art Education – VCAE): "Mainstream art education begins with the assumption that art is inherently valuable, whereas VCAE assumes that visual representations are sites of ideological struggle that can be as deplorable as they can be praiseworthy. The starting point is not the prescribed, inclusive canon of the institutionalized art world, but students' own cultural experience. A major

goal is empowerment in relation to the pressures and processes of contemporary image-makers, mostly those who work on behalf of corporate capitalism, not the cherishing of artistic traditions and the valuing of artistic experimentation. The basic orientation is to understand, not to celebrate" (Duncum, 2002).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

A teacher affects eternity. He can never tell where his influence stops (Henry Adams, On-Line Literature, 2000-2009).

[We may never truly know what differences we make as teachers, if any]…*because of the enormously complex, wide-ranging, highly ambiguous, profoundly personal, unquestionably social, intrinsically political, and inevitably subjective nature of the outcomes of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the process of searching for these answers may offer the pleasantly unexpected: the appearance of additional questions quite numerous and splendid* (Barone, 2001).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Given the widespread changes that have occurred in art education over the past thirty years, this researcher began to question if the teachers in north Louisiana and central Mississippi were learning about and implementing these changes in their classrooms. Postmodernism, community-based art education, multiculturalism, feminism, visual culture studies, and project-based instruction, are all "buzz words" dropped frequently within the research community, but were teachers actually introducing these concepts to their students? Were art teachers in Louisiana and Mississippi falling back on romantic notions of creativity, or were most teachers still relying on more traditional European formalism?

A thorough knowledge of the history of art education inevitably assists researchers in placing current teaching practice in context. Also informative, a history of the general teaching experience has been well documented in educational research. In

addition, some attention has been given to the first-year teaching practice of general educators (Kane, (Ed.), 1991, and Codell, 2001), in an effort to better prepare preservice teachers for the field. Some well-documented histories of the field of art education have been written as well.

More specifically, multiple broad histories of art education (Smith, 1996, Efland, 1990, and Macdonald, 1970) have given us a framework for the study of any art teaching experience and an outline for the expected direction of art education in this country in the twenty-first century. Kerry Freedman and Fernando Hernandez (1998) explored an international view of art education and the teaching experience, emphasizing the influence that different cultures and cultural identity, itself, have upon schools and educators. In addition, smaller historical synopses, such as the study conducted by Jane K. Bates (2000), gave a more concise look at the history of art education. Many more contemporary studies of art classrooms have made bold calls for changes in the art curriculum and an abandonment of curriculum policies such as DBAE (Discipline-based Art Education), calling these models antiquated, antifeminist, and racist (Fehr, Fehr, & Keifer-Boyd, 2000).

From a much broader perspective, Smith and Smith (1994) explored the teaching histories of famous educators ranging from Socrates and Plato to Howard Gardner and Michel Foucault. While Smith and Smith's (1994) text does not concern itself with art education specifically, the authors covered the entire history of western education ranging from the ancient Greeks through the careers of paradigm "shifters," like Kuhn and Freire. Through the use of biography, the authors told the story of education as we know it. To

understand the ebb and flow of some of the most creative thinkers of our time, can only serve to enrich our future direction in art education.

Because this study involved the lives of art teachers who began teaching in 1970 and 1982, respectively, a review of some of the highlights of the history of art education from 1970 to the present is warranted.

Art Education: The 1970s

Based on a 1963 survey conducted by the National Education Association, 75% of the art education that occurred in American elementary schools was being delivered by the general education teacher in the classroom. That indicates that only 25% of American schools enjoyed the services of an art specialist prior to 1970 (Efland, 1990). At the time, the future of art education in this country seemed bleak. However, in the early 1970s, promising developments began to occur in the field, and art education began its transition from its rather meager beginnings toward much loftier goals and expectations. The 1970s offered several major movements in the field that are worthy of review. The first movement demanded greater accountability, and the second was the emergence of qualitative inquiry in art education research.

The accountability movement arose in the 1970s on a wave of the return of conservative politics. Education costs were up, and achievement test scores were down. A dramatic change in education was demanded by the public. All of the art education research and literature that was generated in the 1970s was based on how schools could become more accountable. The focus was on teacher competency, evaluation of programs, and goals and objectives in the classroom (Efland, 1990).

During the late 1960s, and dominating art curriculum during the 1970s, the Kettering Project was instigated by Elliott Eisner and a group of graduate students from Stanford, who included Dwaine Greer, Michael Day and Stephen Dobbs (Uhrmacher & Matthews, 2005). The Kettering Project aimed to clarify art curriculum for elementary age students. Eisner and his colleagues based the project on the following assumptions: "(a) the most important contribution that can be made by the visual arts to the education of children is that which is indigenous to art;…(b) artistic learning is very complex, and the curriculum offered should extend beyond the traditional range of art activities; and (c) the curriculum should attend not only to the productive domain but to aesthetic, critical, and historical domains as well" (Uhrmacher & Matthews, 2005). Eventually, the Kettering Project, through the Getty Education Institute for the Arts, transcended into Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE), which is elaborated upon subsequently.

In addition, the 1970s produced a huge shift from empirical to qualitative research in art education. The educational researchers during this period were hoping to elaborate on the social interactions in the classroom and the lives of teachers and their students, as one cognitive group rather than disjointed samples. Rather than significantly impacting art teaching, however, qualitative inquiry ultimately had an enormous influence on methods for the evaluation of art programs. Because of the relatively extensive qualitative research conducted during this period, evaluators began to realize the difficulties associated with assessment tactics within the ambiguous field of art education (Efland, 1990).

Art Education: The 1980s

This very ambiguity associated with many aspects of art education, was the impetus for researchers to begin taking concrete steps toward the legitimization of the arts within the general curriculum. Toward the end of the 1970s, the Getty Center, along with a strong group of influential art educators including Elliot Eisner, completed work on establishing a group of guidelines for art educators called Discipline-based Art Education (DBAE). At its heart, DBAE included exploration in four disciplines: (a) art history; (b) art criticism; (c) aesthetics; and (d) art production (Uhrmacher & Matthews, 2005). One of the primary goals of DBAE was to legitimize the arts as any other academic subject and to include it in the curriculum as a necessity for all students. The instigators of DBAE felt that by including formal art history, art criticism and aesthetic components into the traditional studio production format, art would be seen as a more justifiable part of every curriculum. DBAE became the standard of most educators in this country. It is still widely used today by many art teachers. Both Violet and Mary, two participants in this study whose teaching histories were reviewed in Chapter 4, are staunch proponents of DBAE.

However, in the past 15 years of art education research, DBAE has been widely viewed as obsolete by many. Dennis Fehr (2000) even goes so far as to contend that DBAE proliferates racism and elitism. His suggestion is that DBAE focuses primarily on the art of western European white male artists, and relegates the arts to only a lofty status – unattainable for most of us. Fehr (2000) does suggest that one aspect of DBAE has been positive for art education -- the fact that it instigates art viewing. He does, however, believe that DBAE ignores marginalized populations and certain relevant social issues. Fehr (2000) sums up his preferred direction for art education by saying, “If art teachers

want to make the world better, we must do more than decorate it." The Getty Center made some attempts to give its DBAE curriculum a broader scope, when in 1992, it published *Discipline-based Art Education and Cultural Diversity*, but many felt that this attempt at more diversity was ineffectual (Smith, 1996).

DBAE, during the 1980s, garnered a wide base of support from art educators all over the country, however, and still seems to be enjoying an ardent following. Many educators today still consider DBAE the best curriculum strategy for art education (La Porte, Speirs, & Young, 2008). Violet, one participant in this study, contended that her high school students need the foundations of art, and DBAE is the most effective approach to achieve this end. Smith (1996) called DBAE "one of the most important contributions to twentieth century American art education." Many more directions for the art classroom have arisen since the late 1980s, including the emergence of postmodern content areas such as multiculturalism, feminism, community-based art, and visual culture studies.

The 1980s were also marked by several significant national reports. *A Nation at Risk* was published in 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (Efland, 1990). This report generated by the Reagan administration seemed to blame the nation's schools for the poor showing of America in world markets. The authors were seen as marginalizing the humanities in the curriculum, and encouraging increased promotion of mathematics, sciences, and computer literacy, in order that America could become more internationally competitive. While *A Nation at Risk* (1983) offered a degree of admiration for the arts, the report in effect labeled art a non-essential component of the curriculum.

In response to *A Nation at Risk* (1983), the National Art Education Association offered its report on the state of art education titled, *Excellence in Art Education: Ideas and Initiatives* (R. A. Smith, 1987). In this report, Smith emphasized the importance of the arts and humanities to the curriculum in order to produce a more balanced approach. In addition, he addressed critics of DBAE, "there is nothing undemocratic, snobbish, or elitist in wanting to acquaint young minds with some of the greatest achievements of the human race… so long as the accent is on quality… there is no reason to disqualify the art of any group, society, or era" (R. A. Smith, 1987).

Another proponent of art education during this era was then Secretary of Education, William Bennett, who also supported DBAE and spoke at a Getty conference in Los Angeles in 1987. Bennett emphasized the importance of learning about masterpieces of art, especially in underprivileged populations. "That disadvantaged children learn about great works and artists that are part of our common culture" is important. He also stated the study of great works of art is "a principal means of transmitting [the values we cherish] from generation to generation" (Getty Center, 1987, p. 31). Smith's report (1987), Bennett's stance (Getty Center, 1987), and DBAE are all considered conservative approaches to art education and have been widely criticized over the last 25 years. Detractors feel that these approaches limit active learning in the classroom (Efland, 1990) are no longer relevant and are steeped in the study of white, European, male artists (Fehr, 2000).

Art Education: The 1990s

If the 1980s concerned itself with conservatism and DBAE, the 1990s produced a dramatic shift within the art education academy. Multiculturalism became prevalent for art educators and researchers during the 1990s. Multiculturalism addressed the changing demographics in America (Smith, 1996) and offered expanded views of content and subject matter. Many differing views of multiculturalism arose during this period. Some saw multiculturalism as a way of healing past oppression of minority populations. Others thought minority populations might be offended by being singled out as different from the mainstream. Some educators considered the political implications of multiculturalism by establishing set goals for their multicultural studies, "to *attack* the dominant culture; to *escape* it, to *repair* the damage it has inflicted, or to *transform* it into a common culture" (Collins & Sandell, 1991).

As Efland (1990) pointed out most art educators are striving to promote diversity in their classrooms. They see the need to address more marginalized populations, because many of these populations are represented in their classrooms. The real goal of the multiculturalism movement that began in the 1990s, and that is still alive today, is to validate all student populations in art classrooms. The controversy that surrounds multiculturalism arises when art educators choose cultural studies that are completely isolated from the students' own lived experiences. As (Efland, 1990) points out, "If art is not about each student's experience, what is it about?"

Art Education: The New Millennium

While art educators and researchers in the 21st century still advocate the appropriate presentation of multiculturalism in the classroom, many other divergences of

thought have emerged. Chief among these are Community-based Art Education (CBAE), Visual Culture Studies (VCS), and Feminism or Gender studies. All of these postmodern approaches are concerned with contemporary society and social issues.

In essence, 21st century art education is chiefly concerned with change. As the title of this study suggests, change is inevitable. Many educators and social researchers today are seeking a dramatic turn away from DBAE. Gayle Marie Weitz and Marianne Stevens Suggs (2000) devised *A Field Guide for Art Educators: Guerilla Tactics for Change.* In this essay, the authors revealed a plan of action for art teachers to make significant changes to their classrooms. They called for: (a) recognition of the art of others (besides the art of dead white European males); (b) inclusion in the art classroom (the eliminations of the denigration of people or cultures who are different); and (c) recognition of the art classroom as a place for social reconstruction and change. Graeme Chalmers (1996) purported a more meaning-making art classroom. He espoused that at this stage, in the 21st century,

> …cultural pluralism is a reality and that reluctant, grudging, or tacit recognition by one culture of another must be replaced by genuine appreciation and proactive corrective action; that no racial, cultural, or national group is inherently superior to another; that no one group's art is basically superior to another's; and that equality of opportunity, in the art classroom and elsewhere, is a right that must be enjoyed by every student regardless of ethnic, cultural, or other differences (p. 2).

While each decade for the past 40 years has brought about a new battle to fight, this idea that art education needs to change seems constant. The academy is constantly evaluating itself and seeking improvement. Dissatisfaction with the present state seems to always loom large. The call for further research is ever present. In any case, a look at where we have been is a useful study as well.

Knowledge of where we have been in art education gives researchers a compass to gauge progress, or the lack thereof. A link to historical progress can be achieved with the case study. Case studies of art teachers' experiences can clarify what is actually being taught, the models that are being implemented, and what we've learned from the history of art education.

THE ART CURRICULUM

Curriculum can be defined in many different ways. Applebee (1996) calls it a conversation. "A curriculum provides domains for conversation, and the conversations that take place within those domains are the primary means of teaching and learning." For the purposes of this research, curriculum was referenced as the content of the art lesson, in other words, "what" was being taught in the classroom (Wheat, 2005).

Child-centered Curriculum

Many curriculum theorists have spoken of a child-centered curriculum, including Franz Cizek (Smith, 1996) and later, Viktor Lowenfeld, whose highly influential work *Creative and Mental Growth (1947)* was the impetus for future works based on the evaluation of children's drawings (Smith, 1996). Lowenfeld developed what eventually

became known as The Stages of Children's Artistic Development (Hurwitz & Day, 2001). It appears that many art educators in north Louisiana and central Mississippi, including Violet and her husband, continue to utilize the Lowenfeld theories in their classrooms. Prior to the advent of DBAE in the 1980s, Lowenfeld's ideas were the basis for much of the curricula in art education.

Content-centered Curriculum

Content-centered art education became more popular with the development of DBAE in the 1980s. At its core is the idea that instruction should be organized around a single content area in the curriculum (Wheat, 2005). The National Standards for Arts Education (2009) were first developed in the early 1990s and emphasized the four disciplines of history, aesthetics, production, and criticism within each of the four arts areas – dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. The National Standards (2009) state that students should know and be able to do the following by the time they have completed secondary school:

> They should be able to communicate at a basic level in the four arts disciplines – dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts. This includes knowledge and skills in the use of the basic vocabularies, materials, tools, techniques, and intellectual methods of each arts discipline.
>
> They should be able to communicate proficiently in at least one art form, including the ability to define and solve

> artistic problems with insight, reason, and technical proficiency.
>
> They should be able to develop and present basic analyses of works of art from structural, historical, and cultural perspectives, and from combinations of those perspectives. This includes the ability to understand and evaluate work in the various arts disciplines.
>
> They should have an informed acquaintance with exemplary works of art from a variety of cultures and historical periods, and a basic understanding of historical development in the arts disciplines, across the arts as a whole, and within cultures.
>
> They should be able to relate various types of arts knowledge and skills within and across the arts disciplines. This includes mixing and matching competencies and understandings in art-making, history and culture, and analysis in any arts-related project.

Most individual states have established content standards for the arts as well. Louisiana and Mississippi both have closely-related arts contents standards, which are adhered to by the three participants in this study. Louisiana's *Standards of Arts Education* (2003), are

also based on the four disciplines established under DBAE in the 1980s; i.e. art production, art criticism, aesthetics, and historical perspectives. The Louisiana standards are:

> Students develop creative expression through the application of knowledge, ideas, communication skills, organization abilities, and imagination.
>
> Students develop aesthetic perception through the knowledge of art forms and respect for their commonalities and differences.
>
> Students develop historical and cultural perspective by recognizing and understanding that the arts throughout history are a record of human experience with a past, present, and future.
>
> Students make informed verbal and written observations about the arts by developing skills for critical analysis through the study of and exposure to the arts.

Mississippi's Visual and Performing Arts Framework (2003) is similar to Louisiana's *Standards of Arts Education* (2003):

> Students will communicate ideas and feelings by creating and performing works of art through the visual arts.

> Students will respond to, describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate the complex characteristics of the visual arts.
>
> Students will understand the roles and functions of artists and visual arts in cultures, times, and places.
>
> Students will perceive, understand, and appreciate the diverse meanings and value of the visual arts.
>
> Students will make valid connections among the arts, other subject areas, and everyday life.

With one exception, Mississippi's and Louisiana's art content standards are both based on the National Standards and on DBAE. Mississippi has added a standard dealing with insuring the students' abilities to make "connections" to other areas of the curriculum and to everyday life. Through this added standard, Mississippi is making a transition to the integrated curriculum.

DBAE and Curriculum Content Choices

A recent study conducted in 2008 by Angela La Porte, Peg Speirs, and Bernard Young included a national survey of 437 art educators. The art teachers were questioned about the factors that influence their choices of curriculum content. This study found that

while most of the participants were influenced by what they learned in their undergraduate experiences, a greater number of their curriculum choices were based on the content with which each teacher felt most familiar and comfortable. Most of the teachers questioned were exposed to DBAE in their undergraduate experiences, and DBAE remains a prominent component of most of their curricula.

In general the La Porte, et.al., 2008, study found that many art teachers do indeed teach what they learned in their undergraduate programs. The content areas ranked highest among all of the participants were art history, studio production, art criticism, aesthetics, and the design elements and principles. All of these content areas are the dominant constituent components of DBAE. The La Porte, et.al., 2008, study also confirmed that at a national level, DBAE techniques are still widely utilized.

The authors, however, summarized that a paradigm shift in art curriculum content is one that takes time. They hypothesize that DBAE is a positive move beyond movements like European formalism or Lowenfeld's theories. The study (La Porte, et.al., 2008) also indicated that on a national level DBAE is, in addition, transitioning among educators toward more postmodern sensibilities by including integrative content strategies like multiculturalism, critical theory and feminism.

The Integrated Curriculum

The idea of integrating the visual arts with other areas of the curriculum is not new. John Dewey (1934) espoused the idea that art was interrelated with every child's perceptions and experiences. Leon Loyal Winslow wrote *The Integrated School Art Program* in 1939 (Hurwitz & Day, 2001). In this volume, Winslow articulated the idea

that art relates very easily to other subjects in the curriculum, for instance, history, social studies, and language.

Proponents of arts integration agree that the arts make such a natural transition into other content areas that they should be utilized within these various areas as a means of enriching the lesson. Critics usually all agree that integration detracts from the importance of art as a subject unto itself. Integration, they feel, relegates art to a secondary role in the curriculum (Wheat, 2005).

The three participants in this study, John, Mary, and Violet, are all full-time art educators, and all three utilize a content-centered curriculum, based on their state standards and the concepts of DBAE. Since each of their schools endorse full-time art educators, it is obvious that their administrators value the arts as a core content area in their curricula. Occasionally, the three participants have worked with the teacher of another content area at their school, but this seems to be rare. Also, occasionally, the three participants have inter-related a child-centered project to their content-centered curricula, but, again, this has only been done on a limited basis. All three seem to be primarily concerned with content.

Multiple Intelligences in the Art Classroom

Two of the participants in this study, Violet and Mary, in their teaching histories, emphasized the fact that they are highly cognizant of multiple intelligences in their classrooms. Both Mary and Violet spoke to the fact that different children learn in different ways. Both subjects felt compelled to alter their curricula in order to accommodate these different learning styles.

The idea of multiple intelligences was first introduced by Howard Gardner, a professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Gardner's *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983) outlined the seven comprehensive categories of intelligence:

1. Linguistic intelligence – the capacity to use words effectively whether orally or in writing
2. Logical-mathematical intelligence – the capacity to use numbers effectively and to reason well
3. Spatial intelligence – the ability to perceive the visual-spatial world accurately and to perform transformations upon those perceptions
4. Bodily-kinesthetic – expertise in using one's whole body to express ideas and feelings and facility in using one's hands to produce or transform things
5. Musical intelligence – the capacity to perceive, discriminate, and express musical forms
6. Interpersonal intelligence – the ability to perceive and make distinctions in the moods, intentions, motivations, and feelings of other people
7. Intrapersonal intelligence – self-knowledge and the ability to act adaptively on the basis of that knowledge (Armstrong, 1994)

Gardner (1983) looked at curriculum theory through the eyes of a psychologist and challenged the previous ideas on basic intelligence. He saw intelligence as more of an individualized profile.

Thomas Armstrong in his *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* (1994) gave educators a practical guide to implementing Gardner's theories in the classroom. His *Seven Ways of Teaching* (p. 52) was a pragmatic approach to lesson planning. Each intelligence-style was broken down into appropriate teaching activities, teaching materials, and instructional strategies. Armstrong also addressed assessment strategies, and identification characteristics of each of the intelligence styles.

CASE STUDIES OF ART TEACHERS

Previous research has revealed relatively few sources related specifically to art educators, while many case studies and life histories of general educators are available. Sherry Klein (Ed., 2003) spoke to this lack of literature in the area of art education case studies, in her introduction to *Teaching Art in Context*, "While case studies for preservice teachers have been published on topics relating to early childhood (Driscoll, 1996), student teaching (Pitton, 1998), music education (Conway, 2000), and multicultural education (Merseth, 1996), this is the first publication of case studies for preservice art education." Elizabeth Kowalchuk (1999) also pointed out this lack of research on the topic of "the processes that novice art teachers go through as they learn to teach." Kowalchuk (1999) was interested in the teaching experience itself. In addition, though a much earlier study, Enid Zimmerman (1994) reflected on this lack of research on art teacher's lives and experiences when she stated, "Regarding these issues, there are few

contemporary research studies about preservice art teacher specialist education." In the years since Zimmerman's 1994 study, much more research has been conducted on the experiences of art teachers in the field.

Real Lives: Art Teachers and the Cultures of Schools

One study that embodied the case study and delved extensively into the art teaching experience is Tom Anderson's *Real Lives: Art Teachers and the Cultures of Schools* (2000). In this case study, Anderson (2000) examined the lives of six different art teachers around the country. The purpose of his study was to, "…provide insights and lessons to those considering teaching art, to students returning from the field for graduate work, and to in-service teachers who want information or even inspiration for the art of teaching (Anderson, 2000, p. 3)." Anderson's (2000, pp. 113-117) "Study Guide" and "Interview Guide" (pp. 118-120) provided a good outline for conducting teacher interviews and observations. The "Interview Guide" was implemented for this study and is attached heretofore as Appendix A, along with some appropriate modifications that better fit the focus of this dissertation. Two more interview and observation guides are included in *To Be a Teacher: Cases, Concepts, Observation Guides* (Cohn, Kottkamp, & Provenzo, 1987), and Elliot Eisner's *Art Education in the Palo Alto Public Schools* (1984). Eisner's (1984) interview guide was used for this study and is also attached as Appendix B. In addition to the three preceding outlines, significant questions about changes in teaching styles, ideologies, professional development opportunities, and peer relationships that have been established and/or changed over each teaching career have been appended to the aforementioned questionnaires.

The Flower Teachers and Women Art Educators

Two studies that highlighted changes in the classroom and school environment over the past forty years are, *The Flower Teachers: Stories for a New Generation*, by Candace Jesse Stout (2002), and *Women Art Educators V: Conversations Across Time, Remembering, Revisioning, Reconsidering*, edited by Kit Grauer, Rita Irwin, and Enid Zimmerman (2003). Each of these volumes included case studies, life histories, personal philosophies, and, in general, "things I learned when I grew up" intimations from each of the art educators interviewed. Stout (2002) conducted case studies of 30 art educators in locations throughout the United States. She targeted a specific group of art educators who began their careers during the 1960s (the flower children) and were either at or near retirement at the time of their interviews.

Several of the essays included in the Grauer, Irwin, and Zimmerman (2003) collection focused on the role that reflection and/or autobiography can play in a teacher's approach. Marla Jaksch (2003) spoke of looking at her own educational practices with a critical eye. She received revelations on her own teaching routines when she took the time to compose an autobiography. She did, however, raise the question as to the relevancy of highly intimate stories with regard to the real school issues and curriculum concerns. Her very personal answer was based on the techniques by which she interpreted her own stories. Careful review of the Jaksch (2003) study leads one to postulate that many teachers will, in fact, misinterpret their own teaching histories. However, this study also emphasized that a knowledgeable and unbiased researcher can bring clarity to some of these life histories.

Art Education in Selected School Districts

Michael Day, Elliot Eisner, Robert Stake, Brent Wilson, Marjorie Wilson, Milbrey Wallin McLaughlin, and Margaret Ann Thomas collaborated on a study titled, *Art History, Art Criticism, and Art Production: An Examination of Art Education in Selected School Districts, Volume II (*1984). In this extensive report, each of the authors traveled to different school locations throughout the country including Whitehall, Ohio; Hopkins, Minnesota; Palo Alto, California; Champaign and Decatur, Illinois; Brooklyn, New York; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Virginia Beach, Virginia, and conducted thorough case studies of each school's art programs. In one segment of the aforementioned study, Brent Wilson (1984) conducted an in-depth survey of Virginia Beach art educators. Of those schools studied in this collection of essays, Virginia Beach was the nearest school in both proximity and southern cultural traditions to north Louisiana. He documented the teachers' beliefs about their schools, art programs, administration, and students among other things. While Wilson's primary focus was his contention that art production was emphasized more than art history and art criticism in most art classrooms, his study included both case studies and teacher-surveys that have significant relevance to this study. Seventy art teachers in Virginia Beach were presented with a questionnaire directed toward their beliefs about their art programs. Inventory subsets related to four belief types—beliefs about self, norms, goals, and general beliefs about their classrooms and administration were evaluated (Wilson, 1984). Also included in this study was a questionnaire given to students revealing their perceptions of the art classroom and of their teachers. The questionnaire utilized by Wilson (1984) was a

thorough and relevant model. Wilson's (1984) study revealed that the Virginia Beach program had a great deal of support from the Superintendent of Schools who believed that the art program should be backed in the same way that other academic subjects were supported. This administrative support brought about significant changes in many of the art programs.

In Wilson's (1984) case study of Cindy Flegal, art teacher at Bayside High School, an account of positive changes that she made in her classroom were noted. Flegal stated that no curriculum guide was available when she began teaching. On her own, she began relating the works of master artists to art production activities in her classroom. As a result of her efforts, her district approved the implementation of a 524-page art history guide which was developed by Flegal and others, for all of their art classrooms (Wilson, 1984). These types of positive, individual changes in teaching styles and curricula are illuminated by careful case study research. In addition to questionnaire results, Wilson included ink sketches of the classrooms, teachers and students in his case study. These were sketches completed on the spot during his observation hours of the classrooms. The sketches emphasized the fact that these are art teachers and art students being observed; and the sketches lend an air of uniqueness and authenticity to Wilson (1984) as artist/researcher.

Other Case Studies of Art Educators

Several other noteworthy case studies relating directly to art educators have been compiled. One was Robin Alexander's (1980) "Mr. Jewel as a Model: An Educational Criticism of a High School Art History Class." This study was an educator's criticism

that is richly narrative and descriptive. Alexander's (1980) case study focused on the art of teaching. The researcher analyzed teaching technique, including instances like classroom mannerisms and joke telling by the teacher. The resulting narrative was a very creative effort to more vividly describe the classroom experience. Alexander (1980) concluded that this form of interpretive research is often easier to understand than other forms of research. *Real-World Readings in Art Education* (2000), a collection of essays compiled by editors Dennis Fehr, Kris Fehr, and Karen Keifer-Boyd, offered a view of a variety of different art classroom experiences and teaching styles including case studies of art educators who deal with gender politics, blind and handicapped students, mountain culture, and sexual identity. These teachers addressed contemporary instructional strategies including postmodernism in general, community-based art, visual-culture studies, feminism, technology in the classroom, and "Guerrilla" tactics for change in art education (Fehr, Fehr, & Keifer-Boyd, 2000). In this same volume, Ed Check (2000) wrote about how his classroom changed over the years from one steeped in the elements and principles of design, to one employing a more postmodern approach.

Ed Check's *Caught Between Control and Creativity: Boredom Strikes the Art Room* (2000) is an essay written by this teacher/researcher which chronicled his early years of teaching art at an elementary school. Check originally employed what Paulo Freire (1990) called the "banking" model for teaching. In this model, the child is simply filled with as much information as possible. After several years of utilizing this technique, Check (2000) realized that the students were not engaged in learning – they were bored, and so was he. The art classroom did not reflect the childrens' real lives and experiences. Eventually, Check's (2000) classroom underwent a complete evolution.

Children became much more involved in the process of project and lesson planning. Art classes became much more relevant to what students were experiencing in their everyday lives. Some of the culturally content-laden topics the children tackled included racial discrimination, childhood abuse, and their own multicultural heritages. Check found these exercises to be the change his art classroom needed. "Both my boredom and my search were roads to better teaching: roads on which I enable not only students' creativity but my own; roads on which we together reexamine, share, and release power" (Check, 2000).

A Case Study of Art in an Exemplary Classroom

In an effort to emphasize the narrative approach, two teachers' classrooms were studied by Brenda Wheat (2005) in her doctoral dissertation. Wheat explored the techniques that teachers employ in order to infuse art into their curriculum. For instance, Vivian Paley used storytelling in her classroom, and encouraged her students to create their own stories. Karen Gallas, an accomplished teacher/researcher, interpreted the narrative through a broader lens. Gallas viewed the narrative as a powerful tool in the classroom, but amplified her view of narrative to include creative outlets like childrens' dancing, drawing, dramatic play, and singing. Gallas believed that children's stories are told through these more kinesthetic experiences as well as through the written word.

Narrative as a Teaching Tool

Mary Jane Zander (2007) also focused on the use of narrative in the practice of teaching. While she acknowledged that stories of both teachers' and students' lives can

affect the art classroom and enhance the making of art, Zander (2007) also wanted us to look at the narrative as a teaching technique in the classroom. In addition, she saw narrative as an effective tool in teaching visual culture to her students. Through narrative Pauly (2003) recommended that students investigate, "when, how, and with whom they learned to construct this knowledge … [and the] memories intertwined with the people, places, and feelings … associated with that learning." Pauly (2003) also discussed the shift in the art classroom over the last decade from DBAE to visual culture studies. "…the shift to visual culture education (Duncum, 2002) is not about including shopping mall environments and excluding Manet paintings, but rather asking new questions about both.

LIFE HISTORIES OF TEACHERS

Many life histories of teachers have been written and analyzed over the course of the last 30 years. The life histories of the three participants in this study provided a lens through which the reader can assess the changes that have occurred over the course of their careers. Criticism of life history as a research methodology has been well-documented. Cary (2006) said, "Life history is always already fiction." She contended that too much remains hidden by the participant, and asserted that the researcher must always ask themselves, "What is shared and why?"

The limitations of this research have been previously outlined. It became evident as each interview was conducted that this research was limited by the amount of information each participant could recall accurately. Many facts were probably eliminated by the participants for a variety of reasons. With all of its flaws, it can still be

argued that life history can provide a significant and effective framework for educational research.

Positionality

Even though many case studies that were reviewed did not incorporate autobiographical treatises, including the model study by Anderson (2000), the inclusion of the researcher's teaching-history goes a long way toward establishing a degree of positionality and validity to any body of research. In a 1996 ethnographic study conducted by Sofia Villenas titled *The Colonizer/Colonized Chicana Ethnographer: Identity, Marginalization, and Co-optation in the Field,* the researcher emphasized this type of autoethnography and was careful to provide personal background information in order to emphasize her positionality in the field. A researcher's autobiography can lend a distinct authenticity to any study.

Women in Art Education

Grauer, Irwin and Zimmerman (2003) compiled autobiographies and short essays from a group of 33 female art educators. These educators' essays covered topics ranging from "historical and contemporary accounts of women artists and art educators, teaching in non-formal contexts, mentoring, healing, friendships, intercultural women's concerns, empowerment, spirituality, and retirement" (p. 4).

Prominent Art Educators

More specific to great leaders in art education, *The Autobiographical Lectures of Some Prominent Art Educators* (Raunft, Ed., 2001) was a collection from "The Autobiographical Lecture Series of Outstanding Art Educators," conducted at Miami University in Ohio between 1958 and 1998. This collection included lectures given by Viktor Lowenfeld, Edmund Feldman, Elliot Eisner, Pearl Greenberg, and Rudolf Arnheim, among others. Raunft (2001) reiterated the importance of biographical and autobiographical research to the study of art education, "The publication of the autobiographical lectures comes at a time when there has been renewed interest in biography, autobiography and leadership in our profession…" Raunft (2001) also noted the evolution of educational philosophies and individuals' perceptions over a lifetime of teaching,

> Autobiography can reflect the changing ideas about the self over time. …my colleagues and I (Raunft, Morris, Langan, & Lindsey, 2000) have been interested in the autobiographies and how they reflect ideas about the self over time, how the lives of these individuals have been shaped through family, friends, mentors, education and how that person developed a sense of themselves with regard to social contexts – how these contexts helped develop their leadership (Raunft, 2001).

Through the use of descriptive narrative, Raunft (2001) showed how we can learn from autobiography. He asserted that each prominent educator described was influenced by many outside influences other than the obvious innate talent with which each was

supposedly born. Autobiography and biography are virtually the only methodologies available for uncovering this sort of data.

Autobiographical Narrative

Elliot Eisner (Beattie, 1995) referred to the autobiographical narrative as "an exercise in intimacy." Eisner made a case for more use of narrative biography and autobiography as a legitimate research methodology. He called these narrative accounts, "sources of understanding and …a means of securing a true comprehension of the way things are" (Eisner, Foreward in Beattie, 1995). Other biographical and autobiographical studies that have offered relevant data are *Educating Esme'* (Codell, 2001), and *Reinventing Ourselves as Teachers: Beyond Nostalgia* (Mitchell and Weber, 1999). Codell's (2001) book was a humorous diary of a first-year teacher's experiences. Mitchell and Weber's (1999) book used a variety of research techniques to explore the act of teaching itself, including biographies, case studies and photography.

Clandinin & Connelly (2000) discussed the importance of narratives to teachers and their educative processes. They also emphasized the idea that teachers' perceptions and teaching strategies are in a constant state of change. "To understand what happens when teacher and student meet in teaching-learning situations, it is necessary to understand their stories. The stories these narratives are built on are both personal, reflecting a person's life history, and social, reflecting the professional contexts in which teachers live."

J. Ulbricht (2009) discussed the importance of teacher-created narratives in *Changing Art Education's Master Narrative through Media Narratives.* Ulbricht (2009)

emphasized that many administrators do not understand the value of the arts to the curriculum. Many art teachers rely on student exhibitions and community event participation to bring attention to their programs. Lawmakers and administrators, however, do not always make the connection between a student's artwork and the intangible values associated with a quality art education. Ulbricht (2009) argued that, as Barone and Eisner (1997) have espoused, teacher narratives can illuminate the sometimes overlooked benefits of art education to the curriculum. Teachers need to become researchers themselves (Kincheloe, 2003).

An Art Educator's Legacy

Another teacher life history was Tom Barone's, *Touching Eternity* (2001), which related the life history of a North Carolina high school art teacher who ultimately had a profound effect on the lives of many of his students. The interviews included in this study were primarily from his former students who felt impacted by this particular art teacher. The art teacher, Donald Forrister, was depicted here as a kind of loner-educator who followed his heart and his passion for teaching. At the core of this text, however, was the life of a savvy art educator who understood how to manipulate the system. The system he understood was the acquisition of federal vocational funds for his art program. Donald Forrister taught at a school that was located in the Appalachian mountains of North Carolina. This area of the country is steeped in traditions of crafting including weaving, pottery and basket-weaving. The art program he developed and brought to national attention was funded because the federal government was interested in

developing native crafts of the area. Donald Forrister realized the niche he had fallen into and used government funding to promote his art program.

Forrister's art program was renowned for much more than just grant acquisitions, however. A large portion of the book, *Touching Eternity* (2001), is a compilation of interviews of former students of Forrister's. Not only was Forrister savvy at obtaining funds for the small North Carolina school, but he was an extremely effective educator as well. His students confirmed the life-changing impact that their art teacher had on their lives. Some of his students interviewed in the text relayed comments such as, "Impossible to forget a man of such charisma;" and he taught me "to look inward, to nurture (my) untended singularity, to be true to (myself)" (Barone, 2001).

Called "hiddenstream" personas by Collins and Sandell (1984), some art educators have long-lasting affects on both people and programs with which they are involved. Like Donald Forrister, Verna Mary Wulfekammer was one such educator. Long after her retirement from a position as Associate Professor in art education at the University of Missouri-Columbia, she was remembered by both colleagues and students as an impactful educator. When interviewed 20 years after her retirement by researcher Paula McNeill (1995), Wulfekammer was still harboring frustration, however, at never being promoted to full Professor, and at being promotionally bypassed by men with lesser experience. She further complained of being poor for most of her life. McNeill's study helped to illuminate some of the issues faced by women art educators with regard to higher education standards. Toward the end of her teaching career, Wulfekammer acknowledged that improvements in the status of women at the university were made. Her biography in this case study, revealed career development trends for future art

educators, and served to enlighten current art educators' views on the history of art education in this country, with particular emphasis on women's issues.

The First Year of Teaching

Additionally, general education biographies and autobiographies offered models worthy of review. Many focus on the first year of teaching, but still provided valuable information. *The First Year of Teaching: Real World Stories from America's Teachers* (Kane, (Ed.), 1991) was a compilation of narratives written by teachers themselves. A nationwide contest was conducted titled, "In the Beginning," in which teachers from all over the country were invited to "write their personal accounts of the trying and triumphant moments, the pivotal decisions, the humorous or awkward situations, and the lessons they had taught and learned during their first year of teaching" (Kane, Ed., 1991). The challenges that some of these teachers encountered upon entering the classroom were sometimes humorous, but always educational. The editor's goal was to challenge bright young men and women to take on the challenge of teaching, by revealing all of the surprises, complications, rewards, satisfactions, and stresses that first-year teachers must endure.

> A teacher can have a terrific day and a horrible day within the same day, sometimes within the same forty-two-minute period. The lesson that failed miserably in the first period can work beautifully an hour later. The student you loathe one day can say something thoughtful and memorable the next" (Gould, 1991).

ORAL HISTORIES OF TEACHERS

The role of reflection seems to be a key factor in learning to be an effective teacher, and in being involved in a satisfying teaching role. A reflective writing exercise or oral reflection in the form of oral history, can yield valuable information about teacher's perceptions of both challenges and successes in the classroom.

Reflection – Oral and Written

A 1999 study conducted by Elizabeth Kowalchuk looked at the perceptions of 37 art student teachers. Participants were asked to write reflectively about four distinct areas of teaching art: (a) describe one challenge faced in the past week; (b) describe something that went well; (c) describe something learned about teaching art; (c) describe something you need to know about art or teaching that would make you a better teacher (Kowalchuk, 1999). The 37 art teachers' biggest concerns were limited to four general categories: (a) student learning and characteristics; (b) classroom management; (c) instructional strategies; and (d) art content. Instructional strategies were mentioned more often than any of their other concerns. The study showed that reflective writing can be an effective data gathering resource. While this researcher's dissertation utilized reflection, it was incorporated in the transcripts of the audio recordings and oral histories of each participant.

The perceptions of teachers' experiences are important to their overall pedagogical understanding. Sevigny (1978) utilized audiotapes, interviews, and diary writing in his study of five university drawing courses, in order to lend validity to his

research. He emphasized that the participant's viewpoint and perceptions must be reinforced with qualitative observation and interviewing, however. Codell (2001), kept a daily diary of her first year of teaching. Many of the conflicts, interactions with students, parents, and administrators, and classroom triumphs were recorded. Journaling aided the author in clarifying her thoughts and recalling key events.

PBS – Only a Teacher

Reflective exercises can give us a more thorough understanding of our history and a more complete context for current trends in the profession. In a special PBS series, *Only a Teacher* (Levin, 2001), fourteen teachers and administrators were interviewed about their perceptions of the teaching profession today and the changes that have occurred over the course of their careers. What began for the producers of this series as an historical account of the teaching profession for the past 170 years, actually resulted in a collection of reflections from noted educators, both living and deceased. Levin collected documents such as diaries and letters from teachers who began their profession more than 150 years ago in order to gain a better understanding of the roots of modern pedagogy. Many noted educators of today were interviewed and asked about changes they've seen in the schools, as well as the most pressing challenges they face today. Photographs and videos were included of the teachers working in their classrooms.

Aired on PBS in 2001, and available online (Levin, 2001), this series was divided into three distinct episodes. Episode one was titled, *A Teacher Affects Eternity,* and focused on the teacher's role as mentor. Episode two, *Those Who Can …Teach,* looked at professional issues facing teachers today, such as unions, pay scales, and teacher

training. Episode three, *Teaching to Change,* dealt with the idea that teachers can have a powerful influence on community progress and social change. Throughout each of these episodes, reflective interviews from noted educators were dispersed. One such oral reflection came from Frank McCourt.

Frank McCourt, who recently died in 2009, was a noted author of such novels as *Angela's Ashes* and *Tis,* but was also a retired high school English teacher. In this documentary, *Only a Teacher* (Levin, 2001), McCourt addressed his early days of teaching at the high school in New York. He recounted his first day of entering the classroom and how alien the whole place seemed. McCourt never attended high school himself, grew up in Ireland, and was completely unfamiliar with the American school system when he began teaching in New York. Initially, he was faced with peers who possessed conflicting views on education, from staunch traditionalists to the progressive students of John Dewey. But, with time, McCourt was able to establish his own voice in teaching. Through reflective anecdotes, he recalled some of the most important things he learned along the way.

> What I learned then was the main device, if you want to call it that for a successful teacher, was honesty. I said look, we're in this together, I'm learning, I would say that, I'm learning. This is what I discovered years and years and years later, I was the big learner out of this teaching experience (McCourt, as recorded in Levin, 2001).

Limitations of Oral History

Although, gaining a data base of teachers' beliefs can be insightful for researchers, problems can occur methodologically when research relies too heavily on teachers' perceptions and/or beliefs. First, measuring beliefs can become inferential because beliefs can be the result of a multitude of underlying suppositions. Secondly, beliefs are not easily verbalized by novice or very young teachers. Also, beliefs can be very private, and not readily admitted to researchers (Kagan, 1992).

ART EDUCATION IN LOUISIANA AND MISSISSIPPI

The state of art education in Louisiana and Mississippi has only been addressed in a superficial way by researchers. A significant area of interest to any teacher living and working in the state of Louisiana is how teaching conditions compare with the national norm. A national study was conducted by the National Art Education Association titled, *Art Teachers in Secondary Schools: A National Survey* (2001). In this study, 672 art educators from across the country were asked about their schools, classrooms, administration, art supervisors, professional development opportunities, and their perceptions and opinions about art education in their districts. Data was collected via a 42-question survey and tested for statistical significance using the Chi-Square test. The questions used in the NAEA study offered a significant and relevant point of comparison format for this study. Perceptions of art teachers from across the country gave researchers a more accurate measuring device from which to compare the art teaching experience in Louisiana and Mississippi. Professional development participation seemed to be a key concern for those educators surveyed.

Professional Development

Professional development opportunities are a key concern for both art educators and administrators. Because the teaching profession is in a constant state of change, and classrooms are constantly evolving, art educators must remain abreast of current technology, laws, and instructional techniques (F. R. Sabol, 2006), or be left with antiquated and irrelevant classrooms. According to the National Art Education Association's 2001 survey of art educators, some regional differences in professional activities were noted. For example, the NAEA (2001) survey found that fewer teachers from the southeast area of the country participated in professional association meetings that dealt with the use of technology in art classrooms than did teachers from other areas of the country. Also, teachers who worked at smaller schools (under 400 pupils) were less likely to attend similar technology-related professional development meetings (NAEA, 2001). Sabol's (2006) study polled art educators from all but one of the 50 states with regard to their attitudes, needs and concerns for professional development opportunities. Louisiana was the only state that was a non-respondent. The author did note, however, that Louisiana's non-response could be accounted for by the impact of Hurricane Katrina at the onset of data collection. An important aspect of any case study focusing on Louisiana art teachers should be to ascertain whether or not the selected educators have actively participated in professional development activities.

Positive Changes

Louisiana art education has made some positive strides forward, however. During the regular session of the Louisiana State Senate in 2007, Senate Bill 299, became Act.

No. 175, and was signed into law. This act called for the revision of curricular guides based on the current *Louisiana Arts Content Standards.* In the 2008-2009 school year, the Department of Education provided professional development training regarding the new standards to teachers and administrators. In 2009-2010 certain schools were asked to pilot the new program. By the 2010-2011 school year, "all public school students in kindergarten through grade eight shall have sixty minutes of visual and sixty minutes of performing arts instruction each week" (Louisiana Art Education Association, 2008). In addition, all public high schools will provide instruction in the visual and performing arts. With the implementation of this law, Louisiana public students will be given much more exposure to the arts, and Louisiana art teachers will be given the opportunity to experience further training and current professional development.

CURRENT TRENDS IN PRESERVICE ART EDUCATION PROGRAMS

As previously noted, relatively little research has been conducted on preservice and in-service art specialist education (Klein, Ed., 2003). A few studies, however, have shown that even though today's newly certified art teachers have received a more thorough education than some more experienced teachers, they are often ill-prepared to meet all of the challenges found in today's art classrooms (Zimmerman, 1994).

First-year Teachers' Concerns

One study whose primary goal was to revitalize a preservice teacher education program was titled, *Analysis of Beginning Teacher Concern Data to Restructure Preservice Teacher Education* (Karge, B., Sandlin, R. & Young, B., 1993). The

methodology for this research involved polling a group of 124 first-year teachers who were working in California. Each teacher was given a survey (Rogan, 1988) of 45 item stems that were analyzed using a six-scale Likert. The subjects completed the survey both at the beginning of their first year of teaching and at the end of that same year. The theoretical framework for this study was based on Francis Fuller's (1974) three stages of teacher development. Those stages were: "(a) self – themselves and their own survival; (b) task - actual teaching duties; (c) impact – related to one's abilities to be successful with students and the teaching-learning process" (Fuller & Brown, 1975). The Karge, et. al. (1993) study concluded that first year teachers do indeed move through these three stages of development. The Rogan (1988) questionnaire was a good survey-format to study and consider in ascertaining and assessing self-identified concerns of new teachers. The survey targeted areas that should be addressed in preservice training of new teachers, and offered suggestions that will assist in addressing these teacher concerns. For example, one conclusion of the Karge, et. al. (1993) study was that beginning teachers felt they needed to retain contact with their university professors and mentors, at least during the first year of teaching. While this concern showed an understandable and predictable degree of uncertainty among first-year teachers, it should also be considered an important area to address for anyone involved in art teacher preparation.

What Every Future Art Teacher Should Know

Mira Reisberg (2008) called for art teachers to become more socially and ecologically aware through an incentive of pleasure in the art classroom. Reisberg (2008) outlined what she believes are the key characteristics of highly qualified art teachers

entering the field currently. She provided a list of what every future art teacher should learn and be exposed to in any preservice program:

1. Standard studio practices
2. History and philosophy of art education
3. Visual culture studies
4. How to select multicultural picture books that are specific to the community
5. How to deconstruct the messages embedded in visual imagery
6. Curriculum webs
7. How to create more pleasure in the classroom, through humor and play
8. How to create allies with the community
9. How to network politically
10. How to develop websites
11. Grant writing expertise

A 2002(a) (Milbrandt) study conducted of art educators in the public schools in Georgia revealed the teachers' concerns about preservice art education programs, particularly with regard to presenting social issues in the classroom. While most of the art teachers agreed that more contemporary social issues should be addressed in the art classroom, few were able to completely integrate these issues into their curriculum. Several reasons were cited for this discrepancy. First, the art teachers were apprehensive about both parental and administrative reaction to the introduction of sensitive social issues in the art classroom. The educators were also not given enough time in the art room to introduce a new concept, in addition to the state content standards that were mandatory. However, most of the teachers' uneasiness related to being ill-prepared to

address social issues. Forty-seven percent of the respondents said that preservice programs in higher education needed to model and better prepare the future educators for dealing with sometimes highly sensitive social issues. The Georgia art teachers called for professors at the university level to lead their classes in discussions on social issues. They also asked for more exposure to "at risk" student populations, through internships and observation hours. Veteran Georgia educators indicated that their backgrounds were in studio techniques and European art history. Many of these teachers felt that current preservice programs should be more steeped in 21st century artists, multiculturalism, and contemporary social issues.

THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

A specific focus of this study was the overall experience of art teachers in Louisiana and Mississippi, including questions about environmental factors, staff and family support, administrative support, budget concerns, and overall stress levels on the job. In a related study that addresses many of these issues, Karge (1993), surveyed a large nationwide sample of general educators. This study concluded that teachers do need a substantial support system in order to succeed and remain satisfied with their chosen profession. This study also showed that with a support system in place -- one that includes peer mentors and university professors -- stress is lessened and attrition can be avoided (Karge, 1993). The Milbrandt (2002a) study conducted in Georgia, reiterated the importance of administrative support, and also showed that art teachers are concerned with parental support, as well as reinforcement from their colleagues in higher education. This researcher hypothecates that the art teachers in Louisiana and Mississippi perceive

an insufficient level of staff and administrative support, as well as an insufficient level of funding and space requirements for their programs. The histories that follow answered some of these questions. Further study is warranted in order to shed some light on these issues.

SUMMARY

The preceding literature review has established a niche for this body of educational research. Many case studies have been conducted on first-year general educators. Relatively few studies have been written about art educators and the changes that they experience through years of teaching. One case study of an art educator located in Louisiana (Stout, 2002), and none located in north Louisiana or in Mississippi, were cited in this review.

As Elliot Eisner suggested in his opening comments in *Constructing Professional Knowledge in Teaching* (Foreward in Beattie, 1995), for this researcher, *Perceptions of Change: The Professional Development, Life and Teaching Histories of Three K-12 Art Educators Located in North Louisiana and Central Mississippi* is a very personal study. It is personal in several different respects. Because positionality as researcher has been established, this study is both personally rewarding and revelatory. It is the intent of this study that others will read and discover, through this researcher's career path and the paths of the study participants, their own, perhaps more direct, personal journeys.

Several different methodologies in the collection of data for this dissertation were utilized -- primarily the interview, document mining, the researcher's journal, and member checking. In the following Chapter 3, these processes were outlined.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

…more art than rules is involved in research (Merriam, 1998)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the methodology utilized for the study titled, *Perceptions of Change: The Professional Development, Life and Teaching Histories of Three K-12 Art Educators Located in North Louisiana and Central Mississippi.* Throughout this chapter, the basic processes undertaken in order to conduct this research have been outlined, along with definitions and background information about each methodology. The essential research methodology that was implemented is a case study. Also included are separate outlines on interviewing, oral history, reflection, the researcher's journal, and document mining.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The initial stage of designing any study must begin with establishing a theoretical framework. The researcher establishes a disciplinary orientation, and this orientation becomes the "lens through which you view the world" (Merriam 1998, p. 45). Merriam (1998) also called a theoretical perspective the "structure, the scaffolding, the frame of your study." A theoretical perspective, as described by Crotty (1998), is "the philosophical stance lying behind a methodology." Mertens (2005) preferred to use the term, paradigm, when referring to a theoretical perspective, and called it "a way of looking at the world."

The theoretical framework from which this research was conducted is interpretive (Mertens, 2005). Interpretive research views "education as a process and school as a lived experience" (Merriam, 2005). The interpretivists hold the view that knowledge is socially constructed and that multiple realities exist (Mertens, 2005). The early perspectives of both Lev Vygotsky and Alexander Luria (Gardner, 1983) support this idea of socially constructed knowledge. According to these two philosophers, "there is… no knowledge and no sense of person that can be separated from one's ability to know others" (Gardner, 1983). The child is at his or her core, a social creature (Gardner, 1983). Vygotsky (1978) stated:

> Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals (p. 57).

Gergen and Gergen (1991) called their approach "social constructionism," and based their ideas on shared intelligence. "Accounts of the world… take place within shared systems of intelligibility – usually a spoken or written language. These accounts are not viewed as the external expression of the speaker's internal processes (such as cognition, intention), but as an expression of relationships among persons." This socially constructed theory of knowledge acquisition is also linked directly to art education by John Dewey (1934) who stated, "Art is the extension of the power of rites and

ceremonies to unite men, through a shared celebration, to all incidents and scenes of life. …Art also renders men aware of their union with one another in origin and destiny."

Interpretivists also hold the belief that in order to draw meaningful conclusions, interpretation of the data collected is made by the researcher (Schwandt, 1998). The researcher is the primary mode of data collection, and the researcher attempts to understand the data from the point of view of those being studied (Schwandt, 2000). The researcher and the participants are interrelated.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND GOALS OF THE STUDY

The goal of this study was to further an understanding of the teaching lives of art teachers residing and working in north Louisiana and central Mississippi at the K-12 level. This study illuminated an art teacher's daily routine, instructional strategies, art goals, pedagogical goals, professional development aspirations, and social interactions with peers, parents, students, and administrators. More specifically, a clearer understanding of how the preceding experiences have evolved over the course of a teaching career was realized. What really happens in an art classroom on a daily basis? How does a daily routine and teaching pedagogy evolve? What is learned through years of experience in the teaching field, and how does this experience change teaching philosophies and strategies? Are the experiences of art teachers in Louisiana different from, or similar to, the national norm? While all of the above topical questions added interest to this study, the primary concern of this research was to discover factors that influence art teacher development in the areas of teaching, conceptual knowledge, and professionalism.

An additional goal was that through furthering an understanding of the experiences of these teachers, a significant contribution to the greater body of art education research has been accomplished. Joe Kincheloe (2003) encouraged teachers to become researchers themselves, as a path to empowerment and enlightenment. In addition to furthering this researcher's knowledge base, the content and methodology of future university art education programs will gain a broader understanding of the art education experience. Beneficial implications for preservice art teacher programs and for future research projects generated from this study were revealed in Chapter 5 as well.

This research was guided by the primary issue question:

What are the perceptions of three K-12 Louisiana and Mississippi art educators regarding their development as art teachers over the course of their careers?

In order to answer this question, two art educators were selected who are currently working in north Louisiana, and one who is currently working in central Mississippi. The methodology utilized in this research was a case study, with data derived from conducting interviews, oral histories and reflection, maintaining a researcher's journal, and document mining. This researcher conducted a total of four interviews with each subject. The first three interviews focused on the participants' life histories, early teaching histories and present teaching experiences. The final interview was a member-checking session, implemented in order to establish validity through triangulation of data.

Much of the dissertation, written in narrative form about the lives of three art educators, attempted to provide a deeper meaning to the art education experience. Postman (1995) said, "Narratives provide a 'reason' for educating." He felt that powerful

narratives can be formed within our academy of educational research that provide a vision for the future, rules of conduct, and a sense of purpose. Postman (1995) postulated that education has been misdirected with an inundation of technology over the past two decades, and that our understanding of our prime directive has been lost. Also, narrative can have both a strong personal and social impact as well, "Deliberately storying and restorying one's life (or, as we shall see, a group or cultural story) is, therefore, a fundamental method of personal (and social) growth: It is a fundamental quality of education" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1991).

In addition to furthering the research literature and providing a broader knowledge base to the academy, the teachers in this study possibly gained a better understanding of their own practice, by reflecting on and organizing their thoughts about their teaching histories.

> Reflection …contributes to teacher thinking and learning to teach. There have been numerous calls for the use of reflective practice at both the preservice and inservice levels in general education (e.g., Clarke, 1995; Schon, 1983; Wildman, Magliaro, Niles & McLaughlin, 1990); and several art educators have used this approach (e.g., Roland, 1995; Schiller, Shumard, & Homan, 1994; Stout, 1995). Vonk (1995) indicates, 'meaningful learning from experience will only take place when a beginner reflects on those experiences' by analyzing what works and what

> doesn't in particular instructional situations (Kowalchuk, 1999).

The intention of this study was to utilize oral histories and oral reflections as a means of clarifying the life and teaching histories of the three participants. Through this reflective practice, the three participants, as well as the consumers of this research, have realized a deeper understanding of their own experiences as well.

PARTICIPANTS

The participants for this study were chosen based on several criteria. They are all full-time art teachers who reside in north Louisiana and central Mississippi. North Louisiana is the area of the country in which the researcher lives and works. The experiences of art teachers in this area are, naturally, of more interest to this researcher. The teachers were also chosen because they have been teaching for quite some time. The foremost aim of this research was the idea of "change" over the course of a career. It was important that data was collected from educators who had been teaching art for a longer span of time. It was also beneficial that subjects were found who worked within a relatively close driving distance of the researcher, due to time constraints, accessibility and cost considerations. The subjects are all teachers whose personal reputations and programs are well-known in this area for being creative, effective, and rigorous in their pursuit of a quality art education for all students. This researcher also acknowledges that while the term "arts" includes theatre, dance, music, and visual arts, this dissertation was focused on visual arts specialists only.

John is a white male who taught in the public school system in north Louisiana for 33 years. He retired in 2004, and is currently an adjunct instructor of pottery at the local university. He has the reputation in this area of being a highly influential art educator. He has received numerous awards for his art, his art program, and his teaching skills over the course of his career. In addition, he was this researcher's first high school art teacher. John provided a wealth of information about the state of art education in north Louisiana, and has become an invaluable source of the changes that have taken place in art education over the last 40 years.

The other two participants, Violet and Mary represented a degree of variety for this study. While both are in their mid-fifties and are white females, they represented art teachers who are working with different age groups, and in different environments. Both have taught for more than 27 years in the public school system in Louisiana and/or Mississippi.

Mary is a certified art teacher at the K-12 level. She has a B.A. in Art Education and is currently pursuing her master's degree. She currently teaches art full-time at a public middle school in Ouachita Parish, Louisiana. Mary coordinates many parish-wide art initiatives and has a reputation for being a rigorous art educator. She has been teaching since 1982.

Violet taught art in the public school system in Ouachita Parish, Louisiana, at both the elementary and secondary level for more than 10 years. She is currently employed full-time as the art teacher at Rose High School in Clinton, Mississippi – a school system within 100 miles of Monroe and Ouachita Parish, Louisiana. Violet's husband was the Art Education professor at the local university during their tenure here.

Violet's husband holds a Ph.D. in Art Education from The University of Florida, and was very influential in the art education practices in this area for more than 10 years. Violet and her husband worked together on many K-12 art projects in Monroe, and they established a precedent as well as an outstanding reputation for excellence in the arts that has not been equaled since their departure.

Recent demographic statistics for Ouachita Parish in north Louisiana revealed that 63% of the population is white, while 34% is African American (Ouachita Parish Louisiana Fact Sheet, 2005). In the city of Monroe, however, statistics showed a population consisting of 61% African American and 31% white (Monroe Louisiana Population and Demographics, 2000). Considering the demographics of the area, an African American art teacher would have given a degree of diversity and relevance to this study. However, this researcher was not able to access an African American participant for this study. It is hoped that future research efforts will include the teaching history of an African American art educator.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

This study was a qualitative research project. Qualitative research can be many different things. As defined by Denzin and Lincoln (1998) qualitative research is an:

> …interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counterdisciplinary field. …It is multiparadigmatic in focus. …At the same time, the field is inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions. …it is drawn to a broad, interpretive, postmodern, feminist, and

> critical sensibility. On the other hand, it can also be drawn to more narrowly defined positivist, postpositivist, humanistic, and naturalistic conceptions of human experience and its analysis.

Several characteristics distinguish all qualitative research from quantitative research. The first is that the key concern of qualitative research is to understand the participants' perspectives (the *emic* or insider's viewpoint) rather than the researcher's. Two other characteristics of qualitative research are that the researcher is the "primary instrument for data collection and analysis" (Merriam 1998, p. 7), and that it involves fieldwork. Essential characteristics of qualitative research are, "the goal of eliciting understanding and meaning, the researcher as primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the use of fieldwork, an inductive orientation to analysis, and findings that are richly descriptive" (Merriam 1998, p. 11).

Defining characteristics of good qualitative research are: (a) it is holistic – it is case oriented; (b) it is empirical – it is field oriented with an emphasis on observations; (c) it is interpretive – researchers rely more on subjective criteria and researcher-subject interaction; (d) it is empathic; (e) validation of data is normally through triangulation; and (e) it is attuned to the existence of multiple realities (Stake, 1995).

Qualitative research can also be interpreted as a type of *bricolage.* The researcher can be considered a *bricoleur* -- a "Jack of all trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself person" (Levi-Strauss, 1966, p. 17). The researcher pieces together information and uses whatever means are at his disposal in order to make meaning of the data for the consumer. If a research strategy is not readily apparent, the researcher becomes

resourceful. "If new tools have to be invented, or pieced together, then the researcher will do this" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). In some respects, calling oneself a *bricoleur*, is very much like calling oneself an artist, and in many ways, it seems slightly egotistical to do so. It is, however, the adept researcher's charge to remain flexible and open to the utilization of different combinations of methodologies in order to achieve a higher level of understanding of the subjects of the study. In this respect, a researcher can humbly consider himself/herself as researcher-as-*bricoleur.* In conducting this case study, several different techniques were utilized in order to make a more complete picture of the art teacher's experience, including interviews and oral histories, the researcher's journal, and document-mining. A realization that any one of these methodologies may require supplementation during the data collection process was always apparent. Restrategizing and enhancing the data collection process through subprocesses, such as oral reflection and member checking, was an ongoing practice.

CASE STUDY

Robert Stake's (1995) interpretation of case study research was both simple and straightforward. While maintaining that the simplicity of the case itself is 'something that a researcher is curious about," he elucidated complexities, problems and concerns any researcher would have when conducting a case study. The research problem was also addressed by Merriam (1998, pp. 55-60). She suggested that researchers should begin, as Stake (1995) also suggested, by asking themselves what they are curious about, and then should proceed to narrow the topic with further research questions. In a research paper, the purpose statement is followed-up by a series of questions. These

questions should be reflective of what the researcher perceives as significant to the study. They also help to determine how data will be collected.

Case studies are research designs that seek to promote an understanding of a situation. "The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation. Insights gleaned from case studies can directly influence policy, practice, and future research" (Merriam 1998, pp. 18-19). Case studies can also be chosen for their uniqueness. Abramson (1992) points out that "atypical cases …are essential for understanding the range or variety of human experience, which is essential for understanding and appreciating the human condition."

Merriam (1998, p. 27) offered varying views of the definition of case studies, and admitted that they can all be confusing to the first-time researcher. She ultimately defined case study as the study of a bounded and integrated system (Smith, 1978, and Stake, 1995), and the study of a single entity or unit that possesses boundaries (Merriam, 1998, p. 27). Once a case is identified and defined, all data collection must begin with a well-defined plan.

A thoughtful data gathering plan in case study must include: "definition of case, a list of research questions, identification of helpers, data sources, allocation of time, expenses, [and] intended reporting" (Stake, 1995, p. 51). Stake's (1995) guidelines for field-observation case study is an effective guide for the first-time researcher. Stake's (1995) guidelines were customized to accommodate this study. This elaborated version of Stake's (1995) plan of action for case study is found in Appendix C.

One of the first steps in creating any legitimate body of case study research is to establish an effective set of research questions (Stake, 1995, p. 15-34). In fact, Merriam

(1998) suggested that this is the starting point of all qualitative inquiry – "What do I want to know in this study" (p. 57). The researcher makes a distinction between issue questions and topical information questions for research design (Stake, 1995). Researchers should focus on the pertinent issue questions, and allow the topical information questions to lead them to these important issues. An example of an issue question would be: "What is the extent of disagreement across this music faculty regarding the teaching of music courses required for all students?" The author's example of a related topical information question is: "What do the parents want from the music program" (Stake, 1995, p. 21)? The topical questions should lead the researcher to further understanding of the "load-bearing" issue questions (p. 34). Many times the research questions will change as the study progresses (p. 33). In *Perceptions of Change: The Professional Development, Life and Teaching Histories of Three K-12 Art Educators Located in North Louisiana and Central Mississippi*, the primary issue question was, **"What are selected K-12 art educators' perceptions of their own changes over the course of their teaching career?"** Subsequent, topical questions fell under the general question, "What factors have contributed to these perceived changes?"

Merriam (1998) reviewed some of the standard procedures for collecting data in a case study. She outlined the process of conducting interviews, being a careful observer, and collecting useful documents. Qualitative data consists of "direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge" obtained through interviews; "detailed descriptions of people's activities, behaviors, actions" recorded in observations; and "excerpts, quotations, or entire passages" extracted from various types of documents (Patton 1990).

Many problems are associated with case study research (Stake, 1995), especially among researchers who advocate quantitative studies. Case study is a subjective form of research; it often generates more questions than it answers; ethical risks are rampant; and case study is time-consuming and expensive. The greater body of social knowledge is seldom greatly impacted by a single case study. But Stake (1995, p. 46) still contended that case study has an appeal to human beings because of their innately curious nature, and to researchers because of their tendency to inquire.

Stake (1995, p. 20) also spoke to the issue of the progression of a case study. Case studies evolve. Issues emerge as more topical information is obtained. New questions arise as more research is conducted. Researcher Alan Peshkin (1985) has said "that he likes to trace the evolution of his inquiry by retitling it each month or so." In addition, Malcolm Parlett and David Hamilton (1976) spoke of the stages of an interpretive inquiry, calling it *progressive focusing,* which is a type of gradual narrowing of focus:

> Obviously the three stages overlap and functionally interrelate. The transition from stage to stage, as the investigation unfolds, occurs as the problem areas become progressively clarified and re-defined. The course of the study cannot be charted in advance. Beginning with an extensive data base, the researchers systematically reduce the breadth of their enquiry to give more concentrated attention to the emerging issues.

Good research questions evolve, and "good research questions are especially important for case studies because case and context are infinitely complex and the phenomena are fluid and elusive" (Stake 1995, p. 33).

DATA COLLECTION

Interviews

The interview was the primary source of data collection for this study. Because the focus of this study was change in the art classroom over time, the research was dependent on each participant's recollection of past events as they related to present events. In addition, this research was focused on each subject's perceptions of said events. As a result, observations in the classroom were felt to be irrelevant to this study. However, the interview became of prime importance. As Patton (1990) explained:

> We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe… We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing then is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective.

Consequently, in order to understand what really has transpired over time in the participants' classrooms, the researcher must rely primarily on the interview. While the Anderson (2000) Interview Guide (Appendix A) and the Eisner (1984) Interview Guide (Appendix B) aforementioned were the starting point for the interview process, the meetings with each participant naturally evolved as more was learned about each teacher.

Each teacher presented a unique story; thus a unique set of questions developed as the interview progressed. This uniqueness is the power of the case study. Janesick (2003) spoke to this individualism associated with each unique case,

> In fact, the value of the case study is its uniqueness; consequently reliability in the traditional sense of replicability is pointless here. I hope that we can move beyond discussions of this trinity of psychometrics and get on with the discussion of powerful statements from carefully done, rigorous long-term studies that uncover the meanings of events in individuals' lives.

Stake (1995) in his case study of the Harper School (pp. 137-160) proposed a series of questions to students, administrators and teachers who were affiliated with the school. His interviews changed over time, because of the developing stories of the interviewees, and new information that he obtained during the process of the case. In many ways, an interview can be a never-ending process. Stake (1995) stressed the importance of fairly rapid interpretation of interview notes. His data analysis of The Harper School was dependent on the immediacy of his impressions.

An interview can lend a degree of richness and uniqueness to the narrative of a teacher's life that cannot be attained through most of the other forms of data collection in a qualitative study (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). The only other form of data collection used in this study that rivals the personalization of an interview is reflection, which was recorded concurrently within the interview process.

Certain guidelines have been offered by seasoned methodologists regarding the interview. Interviews can be either structured or unstructured. A concerted attempt was made by this researcher to avoid certain questions, for example, yes or no questions, as well as leading and multiple-answer questions. Merriam (1998, pp. 87-93) has given helpful suggestions regarding recording an interview, as well as the transcription process. All of these suggestions were given careful consideration as the interview process unfolded.

Many questions emerged in response to the participant's answers. Yin (2003) described the ability to ask good follow-up questions during the course of the interview as a prerequisite for a good case study investigator. For this reason, careful audio-taping and transcription of each interview was critical. Yin (2003) described the ideal interview as being conversational. He reiterated that during the interview process, the researcher has two jobs: "to follow your own line of inquiry, as reflected by your case study protocol, and (b) to ask your actual (conversational) questions in an unbiased manner that also serves the needs of your line of inquiry."

Hancock and Algozzine (2006) offered a five step-plan for successful interviews. The adept case study researcher should: (a) identify appropriate and knowledgeable participants; (b) develop a good interview guide; (c) choose a neutral and quiet setting;

(d) obtain appropriate recording equipment; and (e) always adhere to legal and ethical standards. A good interviewer should always let the participant know the purpose of the research being conducted (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). In addition, being a good listener is an important attribute for a case study researcher (Yin, 2003).

When conducting an interview for a case study, the interpretation of data by the researcher is an inevitable and predictable outcome of the process. The researcher becomes a useful research instrument (Klinker & Todd, 2007). This is one of the hallmarks of qualitative research. Interpretation, however, is a key characteristic of both quantitative and qualitative research. "Interpretation is a major part of all research. I am ready to argue when someone claims there is more interpretation in qualitative research than in quantitative – but the function of the qualitative researcher during data gathering is clearly to maintain vigorous interpretation" (Stake 1995, p. 9). Indeed, many stories could never be told without the interpretative eye of a careful researcher involved in a thoughtful qualitative study. Many social researchers have addressed the question that always arises regarding the validity of qualitative research. "While warrants can be strong without being scientific, they can never be strong if the scholar isn't careful, critical, and reflective – a problem that exists in equal measure for the quantitative, qualitative, and humanistic scholar" (Berliner, 2000).

For the purposes of this dissertation, three interviews and a fourth member-checking review were conducted of each of the three participants. The first interview focused on the life history of the participant; the second interview was concerned with teaching today; and the third interview dealt with significant changes they've each perceived. Each interview was between two and three hours long. Approximately 36

hours of taped interviews were transcribed by the researcher, and then coded for assimilation into narrative form. A hard copy of each of their sub-chapters was mailed to the participants for member-checking, followed by a telephone interview/consultation with each.

Document Mining and Photography

One important method associated with this study was the collection of historical documents from each participant. The participants were asked for photographs, lesson plans, news clippings, evidence of teaching awards and accolades, yearbooks, and other historical and contemporary artifacts that aided in enhancing this study.

Documents can be an important source for any qualitative study. They are defined broadly as any written form of communication. Some examples are public records (birth certificates, court transcripts, government documents), personal documents (diaries, letters, home videos, scrapbooks) and physical materials (artifacts, tools, instruments of everyday living) (Merriam 1998, pp. 112-118). Documents can also be researcher-generated. These can include photographs or videotapes generated by the researcher (Merriam 1998, pp. 118-120). For the purposes of this study, permission was obtained to photograph each of the participants. They also agreed to provide historic documents to be photographed and included as a part of this research. These historic documents included early teaching photographs of the subjects, their classrooms, early teaching records such as lesson plans and newspaper clippings, as well as current teaching documents, such as lesson plans, study guides, and other curricular documents.

The inclusion of historic documents and photographs has augmented the historical context of the data collected.

Both early and late teaching photographs have been utilized in several noteworthy studies. Stout (2002) included early or first-year teaching photographs of each educator, as well as near-retirement photographs of each. Both Mitchell and Weber (1999) and Anderson (2000) incorporated photography in their studies. Ian Grovesnor (1999) wrote of the historical power and loaded content of a single photograph of a classroom or a teacher. He wrote:

> It captures a moment in classroom life and its internal clues enable us to locate it both in time (late nineteenth century) and in space (Somerville Road Board School, Birmingham, England). It reflects a natural state of affairs, although it is possible by looking at the writing on the blackboard to recognize an element of 'staging'. Statements can be made about the teaching body, and about their dress, roles can be ascribed (to the head teacher, the teacher, the visitor); observations can be made about the composition of the pupil body (girls only), their number, age and condition, and the visible classroom resources (desks, table, teaching equipment, pictures and so on). Internal clues allow the viewer/reader to identify the subject being taught (Domestic Economy), and the lesson content (the Chemical

Composition of Water) and this can be related to the rise of practical science in the school curriculum in the 1880s.

While photographs of students were not included in this study in order to protect the anonymity of any children in the classroom, photographs of both the teachers and their classrooms were collected. In addition, photographs of mentors and certain special awards given to the participants were collected, although not all were included in the final document. In addition, both early and late teaching photographs of each of the teacher/participants served to magnify the idea of "change" in the classroom and offered an appropriate historical context, which was one of the primary goals of this study.

Oral Histories and Reflection

"Qualitative case study is highly personal research. Persons studied are studied in depth. Researchers are encouraged to include their own personal perspectives in the interpretation" (Stake, 1995). It has long been hypothesized that many of the day-to-day problems and issues faced by teachers in the classroom can be alleviated through the act of reflection. Within the field of education, "reflection as a means to improve educational practice has much potential in the preparation of art teachers" (Susi, 1995). Reflections help teachers to organize their thoughts and to understand what works and what doesn't work in certain classroom situations. Unfortunately, most teachers do not use reflective practice in routine situations. Research has shown that reflective practice can be most effective in both routine and non-routine situations; and this act of habitually reflecting can be the mark of a highly-trained professional educator (Schon, 1983).

Oral reflection and/or oral histories can have an equal impact on both participant and researcher. Much like journaling, reflection can be a therapeutic practice. Donald Schon (1991, p. 5) addressed what he called "the reflective turn." Jeanne Bamberger and Eleanor Duckworth (1982) emphasized the influence that reflective exercises can have on a teaching career as well as a researcher,

> In different ways and to varying degrees, reflective writings observe, describe, and try to illuminate the things practitioners actually say and do, by exploring the understandings revealed by the patterns of spontaneous activity that make up their practice. Whenever these patterns appear strange or puzzling, the authors assume that there is an underlying *sense* to be discovered and that it is their business as researchers to discover it. As a consequence, they are sometimes led to reflect on their own understandings of their subjects' understandings; in order to discover the sense in someone else's practice – they question their own.

This research includes the oral histories and reflections of each participant. Also included in Chapter 1, is a brief synopsis of this researcher's teaching background, in order to establish positionality. This reflective practice has proven cathartic for the researcher, and possibly life-changing for the participants involved. These oral reflections were transcribed and presented to each participant in writing for review, prior to being included in this study.

Ultimately, both present and future educators can learn a great deal from those who have come before us. In Ralph Raunft's Introduction to *The Autobiographical Lectures of Some Prominent Art Educators* (2001), he alluded to the impact of autobiography and life histories on future art educators. He referred to John Michael who created the lecture series called "Autobiographical Lectures of Outstanding Art Educators," at Miami University in 1972, which inspired the book. Michael believed, "that these histories would inspire future art educators – firstly his students and then others – as Lowenfeld's autobiography inspired and challenged him to be the best that he could be both personally and professionally" (Raunft, 2001).

Autobiography offers a more thorough understanding of, and appreciation for, the life experiences of any teacher. JoAnn Klinker and Reese Todd (2007) of Texas Tech University conducted an autoethnographic study that involved each contributing their life histories in order to further an understanding of the decision they each made to teach at the university level. These two authors came to a realization that their life stories could have an impact on future generations of educators. They spoke of the liberation that ensued as a result of telling their stories. "If the telling of women's stories in their adult lives contributes to the understanding of decision making and adult development, we offer our reflections as a vision of hope and possibility for future generations" (Klinker & Todd, 2007).

Autobiography, in the form of oral history or reflection, augments endeavors toward enhancing any teacher training program. Gardner (1997) tenaciously believed in studying the lives of the great thinkers of both the past and the present. These thinkers will influence the future leaders and teachers of our children. While this researcher

would not presume to place her teaching history alongside that of Elliott Eisner or Viktor Lowenfeld, for example, one can assume that future generations of art education students in north Louisiana and central Mississippi may learn practical applications from studying the histories of the three participants involved.

In addition, during the process of reconstructing only the brief positionality segment found in Chapter 1, some pertinent incidents in the researcher's educational career, that previously had been forgotten, were recalled. Through the process of reconstructing this brief history, for example, the role that certain "invisible" (Ulbricht, 1999) teachers have played in the researcher's becoming an art educator/researcher became unmistakably evident. "Invisible" educators are identified by Ulbricht as untrained and unofficial teachers who held great influence over who we ultimately became – most often a parent or guardian.

While autoethnography and autobiography has been criticized as being narcissistic and self-inflating (Coffey, 1999), this study was complemented by the inclusion of reflective practice. The actual writing of the positionality essay will quite possibly lead to further revelations and realizations. As Klinker & Todd (2007) wrote, "The resulting discussion between us led to deeper interpretations and sparked discussion of richer interpretations and explanations including emotion." Mary Beattie (1995) also wrote of the change that overcame her as she proceeded with an autobiographical study, "…I am aware of the way in which my understandings were reconstructed through the process of setting out such a research framework, a process that was challenging for me, required a new journey of inquiry, and resulted in feelings of personal and professional growth."

Of course, the primary concern for researchers who are utilizing the methodologies of oral history, autobiography and reflection, is the question of accuracy or textual truth (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Validity and reliability have been addressed subsequently, and these are relevant to the triangulation of data protocol. However, also considered, were supporting documents such as newspaper journal articles, yearbook entries, and awards and honors given to each subject. In addition, member checking was employed, along with multiple interviews.

The first word of the title of this study is "perceptions." The title implies that this study is concerned with the participants' interpretations or judgments about the facts as they occurred. The data collected for this study was an accurate description of each participant's perception of the facts. While the facts of the study were verified by document mining, in the end this study does rely on the subjects' interpretations. The participants' perceptions were necessarily skewed by their own histories and situations, but, again, this is not necessarily a fallacious thing. Mary Catherine Bateson (1990) stated, "I have not tried to verify these narratives, beyond attending to issues of internal consistency and checking them against my knowledge of the individual.… The accounts are shaped by each person's choice and selective memory…. These are stories I have used to think with". The research community should consider these narratives to be multiple layers of a collective reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).

The Researcher's Journal

Maintaining a researcher's journal was an inspirational and revelatory practice during the course of this study. Much of the collection of information for this body of

work was maintained in one journal format. The journal contained professional journal clippings, reference notes, personal anecdotes, and drawings. While the journal is full, at this time it is not considered complete. A future research project will include further elaboration of this journal. During the course of this study, a thorough review of some well-written researcher's journals was conducted, most of whom were educators and/or artists as well. Each of these researchers provided beneficial motivation for the implementation of this methodology, beginning with the work of Carl Klaus.

Dr. Carl Klaus was the founder of the nonfiction writing program at the University of Iowa. He regularly taught courses on journal writing at UI, until his retirement in 1998. In addition, Dr. Klaus published several journals including, *Taking Retirement: A Beginner's Diary* (1999); *Letters to Kate: Life after Life* (2006); *My Vegetable Love: A Journal of a Growing Season* (2000); and *Weathering Winter: A Gardner's Daybook* (2003). A review of Dr. Klaus' syllabus for the course titled, *Forms of Nonfiction: Daybook and Journal*, included a portion of an unpublished journal/manuscript which the author wrote during the semester in which he was teaching the course. In his course journal, Dr. Klaus discussed his apprehension about teaching a course that he'd never taught before, his elation at the lively discussion among the students on the first day of class, and a review of the literature he deemed important for any future journal-creators (C. H. Klaus, personal communication, March 15, 2003).

In addition to Dr. Klaus' journals, the journals of Annie Truitt (1982 and 1996), Randy Pausch (2008), Sylvia Ashton Warner (1963), and Parker Palmer (1998) were all reviewed. All of these teacher's journals consist of personal, daily entries about their teaching experiences. Each of these journals seemed overtly personal, and examined the

heart of the teaching experience. Certain anxieties, perceived failures, and glorious triumphs were experienced by each teacher, and written about in revealing and candid ways. Truitt's (1982 and 1996) journals focused on her life as an art teacher. Randy Pausch (2008) used his journal as a farewell letter to his children, his wife, and to the university teaching position that he loved. In 2008, Pausch lost his battle with terminal cancer.

In Sylvia Ashton Warner's (1963) journal, the author discussed her very distinct ideas about the educational system. She espoused teaching techniques that celebrated the individual, harboring great respect for the language that each child already possessed. She believed that class sizes should never be more than nine students, and that standard textbooks were not effective. Many of her written concerns are still relevant today. Her journal seems to be an immediate, daily account of events as they transpired in her classroom, thus lending a degree of credibility to her words. Like most of the other teachers' journals that were reviewed for this study, Ashton-Warner's (1963) also explored the idea of "professional loneliness."

Borg (2001) discussed the importance of making a research journal public. He stated, "… in addition to the benefits for the writer of keeping a research journal, such journals, when made public, can enable readers – novice or otherwise – to gain insight into the inadequately explored domain in … teaching of what it means to be a researcher and to do research." Carl Klaus' (1999) published daybooks underscored the effectiveness of this research strategy. Future research generated from this study will include further investigation through the utilization of the researcher's journal.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected in this study was qualitative. It was comprised of transcribed interviews of participants, photographs, documents, journal entries, and reflective oral histories. After collecting the initial data for the study, the process of analyzing and reporting it in the form of a narrative was initiated. Merriam (1998, pp. 151-245) reviewed the process of analyzing and reporting qualitative data. She pointed out that data collection and analysis are not linear activities. These two processes occur simultaneously. Immediately upon collecting data, the researcher begins the process of analyzing by making tentative hypotheses (Merriam 1998, p. 151). A review of the primary data analysis strategies in most qualitative studies includes ethnographic analysis, narrative analysis, phenomenological analysis, and the constant comparative method. Narrative analyses are "the ways humans experience the world" (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). The emphasis here is on the stories people tell and the language they use. In *Perceptions of Change: The Professional Development, Life and Teaching Histories of Three K-12 Art Educators Located in North Louisiana and Central Mississippi,* the primary data analysis strategy was narrative analysis, as this study was concerned with teachers' perceptions. Stake (1995, p. 74) discussed categorical aggregation and direct interpretation of data. These two methods of interpretation involve making an analysis based on several instances and interpreting an individual instance, respectively. Stake (1995, p. 78) examined the researcher's quest for understanding the data collected, "The search for meaning often is a search for patterns, for consistency within certain conditions, which we call "correspondence."

Mertens (2005) offered a template to follow in analyzing data in a qualitative study:

a. Analysis occurs from the moment data collection begins. During the course of the study, the researcher reviews the data and looks for "similarities, differences, correspondences, categories, themes, concepts and ideas, and analyzes the logic of previous analytic outcomes, categories, and weakness or gaps in the data" (p. 421).
b. The data analysis is thorough, and is deemed complete when the researcher begins to notice regularities in the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
c. Reflective note-taking by the researcher is recommended in order to provide accountability for the process. An independent or unbiased researcher is recommended for an audit of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
d. Read all of the data, and then divide it into smaller units for clarity.
e. Notice emerging, organizing themes. Allow the data to establish these themes.
f. Begin comparing, defining similarities, finding negative evidence, and discovering patterns.
g. Remain flexible. Categories and patterns can change with the discovery of more data.
h. Implement triangulation in order to confirm perceptions.
i. Write a descriptive narrative of the findings.

Miles and Huberman (1994) offered these suggestions for analyzing data in a qualitative research study:

a. Practice coding for initial field notes, interviews and observations.
b. Note personal reflections on these field notes.
c. Begin identifying similarities, patterns, and themes in the data collected.
d. Go back into the field, being mindful of the noted patterns.
e. Begin making generalizations based on these similarities.
f. Assess those generalizations in the context of a formal theory or construct.
g. Continue data collection and analysis until the above similarities and/or patterns emerge.

A visual account or graphic display marking the progress of the study, and a well-organized storage system for previously collected data (Stake 1995, p. 55) were maintained. Digital files were coded, and catalogued by date and pseudonym. Proper organization of the workspace, and time management were two keys to the success of this project.

VALIDITY

Triangulation of data lends a degree of validity to research. The standards for validity continue to rise. Sam Messick (1989) of the Educational Testing Service avowed the use of *consequential validity* of measurements. He considered it the researcher's responsibility to hold to high standards of measurements; otherwise, the research will not

ultimately be regarded as noteworthy. Merriam (1998, pp. 198-219) reviewed the definitions, problems associated with, and important ways a researcher should deal with validity and reliability. Internal validity, which is the extent to which the research findings correspond with reality, should be addressed by using triangulation of data, checking and re-checking interpretations of data with participants, staying on-site for longer periods of time, asking peers to comment on data collected, involving participants in more areas of the research, and clarifying the researcher's position and biases. Reliability, which measures the degree to which the findings are consistent, is measured by the researcher's explanation of the theoretical underpinnings of the study, triangulation of data, and by a written audit trail. The burden of ethics in any qualitative study is borne ultimately by the researcher.

Norman Denzin (1984) identified the following triangulation protocols. Data Source Triangulation involves repeating data collection at different times, with different participants, or under different circumstances in order to confirm the accuracy of the findings. Investigator Triangulation is accomplished by the researcher making a change in some of their own processes. An example would be to have a different researcher conduct the same interview or look at the same phenomenon. This was not a practical option for the purposes of this study. However, another important example that helps to create a type of checks-and-balances of data collection is to invite other researchers to examine the data that has been collected periodically, and allow them to offer their interpretation. Theory Triangulation is achieved when the researcher allows co-observers or reviewers who come from differing theoretical perspectives, to interpret the collected data. This method, according to Stake (1995, p. 114) can serve to complicate findings

and produce the necessity for more triangulation. Finally, researchers may utilize Methodological Triangulation. This most widely used method involves combining several different methodologies in order to verify data. For example, a researcher might observe a phenomenon, interview another participant who witnessed the phenomenon, and then conduct a document review which will confirm that phenomenon. This process gives credence and validity to the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Member Checking

Stake (1995, p. 115), in addition to advocating Denzin's (1984) four protocols, included the triangulation method of member checking. Participants in any study are always given access to the data in order to confirm the accuracy of the findings. At this point, participants many times lend confirmations or revisions of their own story through the eyes of the researcher. It is the researcher's decision as to whether such changes will be included in the final report, but, more often than not, the participant's contributions are beneficial to the research. In *Perceptions of Change: The Professional Development, Life and Teaching Histories of Three K-12 Art Educators Located in North Louisiana and Central Mississippi,* each teacher was encouraged to review transcripts from their interviews, peruse any documents that were either mined or created by the researcher, and review the final report. Careful consideration was given to any input from the participants, and changes were made where warranted.

REPORTING THE FINDINGS

Data was gathered and analyzed in an organized manner. Merriam (1998) asserted that much of the analysis of data actually occurs during the writing process. The researcher is able during the practice of writing to see "holes" or weaknesses in his/her data. As Merriam (1998) stated with the actual writing of the report, comes a kind of catharsis or, at least, a certain clarity of the data.

> It seems, in fact, that one does not truly begin to think until one concretely attempts to render thought and analysis into successive sentences. One is never truly inside a topic – or on top of it – until he faces the hard task of explaining it to someone else. It is in the process of externalizing (writing) one's outline descriptions, analyses, or arguments that they first become visible to oneself as 'things' 'out there' that are available for scrutiny. When they become available as external objects – as texts – one can literally see the weaknesses – points overlooked, possibilities unattended, assertions unsupported or unillustrated (Lofland 1971).

SUMMARY

The idea of exploring changes in the classroom is an interesting prospect. It is also somewhat comforting to know that most research changes as it progresses (Stake, 1995). One of the most difficult aspects of conducting any study is remaining on task throughout the process. Case study seems to be somewhat forgiving in this respect. Case study researchers seem to know from the outset that their study will evolve, and they tend

to embrace this idea. The idea of researcher-as-*bricoleur* (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) also emphasizes the concept of change because, in some cases, the researcher must become resourceful and even "invent" methodology that will work for the given situation.

One of the purposes of this study was to bring more information, more contemporary issues, and more relevance to the discipline of art education research. A primary goal was to improve research strategies in order to better serve the art education academy, both in north Louisiana, central Mississippi, and nationally. This study was conducted by a teacher/researcher. "Teachers must join the culture of researchers if a new level of educational rigor and quality is ever to be achieved" (Kincheloe, 2003).

Another goal was to gain a better personal understanding of the lives of art teachers who are working in north Louisiana and central Mississippi, and to document changes over the course of their teaching careers. A body of research was created that can enlighten other art educators and potential art educators as to an understanding of what it means to teach art. As both Robert Stake (1995) and Elliot Eisner (1995) contended, a qualitative study is an intimate one. Persons are studied in depth. Researchers are encouraged to include their own personal perspectives in the interpretation." Stake (1995, p. 136) likened the case study to a work of art, "Finishing a case study is the consummation of a work of art. A few of us will find a case study, excepting our family business, the finest work of our lifetime."

In the following chapter, the stories of John, Mary and Violet were told. These three art educators have been teaching in north Louisiana and central Mississippi for 27 years or more. A life history, a past and present teaching history, and significant perceived changes over the course of each of their careers have been outlined. Their

stories offer a lens through which the art teaching experience in this area of the country can be viewed and analyzed.

CHAPTER 4: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The following life and teaching histories were written in order to document changes that have occurred over three art educators' lifetimes. The data collection was guided by the research question: **What are the perceptions of change of three K-12 Louisiana and Mississippi art educators regarding their development as art teachers over the course of their careers?** Data collection was conducted under the schema of the interpretive paradigm. During the course of data collection, the goals of the study also served as guidelines for interviewing. The primary goal was to make a significant contribution to the greater body of research in the field of art education. In addition this study provided: tangible data to other art teachers in the field striving to improve their level of pedagogy; equally valuable insights into the art teaching experience to preservice art education programs and students; and assisted in garnering further recognition, respect and support for the discipline of art education.

JOHN

Photograph 4.1

Photograph 4.2

I am a teacher at heart, and there are moments in the classroom when I can hardly hold the joy. When my students and I discover uncharted territory to explore, when the pathway out of a thicket opens up before us, when our experience is illumined by the lightning-life of the mind – then teaching is the finest work I know. The work required to "know thyself" is neither selfish nor narcissistic. Whatever self-knowledge we attain as teachers will serve our students and our scholarship well. Good teaching requires self-knowledge: it is a secret hidden in plain sight (Palmer, 1998).

This dissertation was initiated with a series of interviews of John, an art teacher with a lengthy and rich teaching history. It is because of his legacy that he was chosen for this study. When John was asked to participate in this research, there was never a moment of hesitation on his part. He indicated that he considered it an honor to be asked. His attitude seemed incomprehensible at the outset. He was being asked to give up hours of his time to talk about his life and art classes he taught years ago, some of which were hardly memorable. It seemed such an imposition. And yet, this researcher was so grateful for his time and his enthusiasm for the study.

Upon entering John's office that first day, armed with a tape recorder and notepad, a mental note was made as to the calmness of the place. Unlike many art teachers, John's private office was pristine -- a veritable Zen sanctuary. Beautiful black and white photographs of his daughter, who is currently working on a master's degree in art history, and photographs of his wife were artfully hung about the room. A coffee station with extra clean cups was stacked neatly ready for the next day's brew. His desk, itself, was virtually bare. One stack of three or four obviously important papers sat to the

side of the virtually clear work surface. His sense of organization was enviable. His demeanor matched his desk that first day. A certain serenity and contentment permeated the interview as he spoke about his life to date. His voice was calm and soothing. It was eventually apparent that his ease had come naturally with years of experience, and a self-certainty of himself as a teacher. With each successive interview, it was evident that John had achieved what all teacher's seek -- the ability to move past the initial, sheer terror of walking into a classroom filled with unknown students, and -- to enter a classroom with complete and confident assurance of oneself (Palmer, 1998).

LIFE HISTORY

Early Life and Education

John was born on August 22, 1947, in a small rural, community in northwestern Louisiana called Mott. It is located between Plain Dealing and Sarepta. John described it as the place where everyone would go to the only grocery store in the area and "get their steaks." John's parents are now deceased, but his entire childhood was spent in Mott, and his parents lived there until both of their deaths. Mott is not charted on most Louisiana state maps. Apparently it is still only populated by the one, landmark grocery store. Plain Dealing and Sarepta are easily located on a Louisiana map, however. The midway point between the two villages is located about 7 miles from the Arkansas line, and approximately 30 miles north of Shreveport. Having spent several formative high school years in an area of Louisiana that is within a one-hour drive of Mott, this researcher can attest to the fact that Mott is considered "extremely rural" or, "underdeveloped" by most national standards. The idea that John may have been exposed at an early age to any

free-thinking, liberal-minded, creative art educators is highly unlikely. He admitted that art was something that was very personal to him, and a subject that was not offered at a formal level in his school. When asked if either of his parents were artistic, John replied with a definite "no." One can conclude that John had very few early influences on his chosen career path.

John's entire educational experience from first through twelfth grade was completed at the Plain Dealing School in Bossier Parish, Louisiana. He was never exposed formally to the arts during this time, but he was always sketching something in his notebook. The high school offered a limited creative outlet through the home economics teachers. The students were asked to complete posters for the school during home economics classes. However, in his spare time, John drew in his notebooks virtually every day. His primary drawing subjects were cars and girls. He apparently had one memorable teacher in 7th grade, Ms. Walker, who noticed the drawings of horses he was doing in his notebook, and held them up for viewing by the entire class. That one instance by Ms. Walker caused John to think that perhaps he did have a talent worthy of consideration. He was encouraged by that one small act of an impressed and caring teacher. Ms. Walker most likely never was aware of the impact she had on his future. But John never forgot it.

Higher Education

John did not initially anticipate attending college at all. He did feel the expectation, however unlikely, that most high school students would continue their education at some higher level. John thought, at least initially, that he'd just get a job

though. He soon realized that much of the work that was available to him at the time involved manual labor. "I really didn't plan to go to college, until I realized that manual labor wasn't something that I wanted to do the rest of my life. I knew I was good at drawing, and I did it everyday. It was my way of expressing myself in my spiral notebook." He made the decision to at least start a college career. John began taking classes at Northwestern University in Natchitoches. His chosen major was art – the only thing for which he'd ever really had any passion.

Natchitoches, Louisiana, is a few steps up from Mott. For one thing, it boasts a university that is currently a part of the University of Louisiana system. Natchitoches also has been recognized as one of the most alluring small towns in the south. It is brimming with culture and southern charm. It also was made famous by playwright Robert Harling, who is a native of Natchitoches, and who wrote the screenplay for the 1989 Hollywood blockbuster, *Steel Magnolias,* based on the escapades of his mother and her close friends. Natchitoches, though still a small town, had to have been an enlightening experience for John.

John met and was highly influenced by an art teacher at Northwestern Louisiana University, Don Alexander. John feels he learned more from this one man than any other artist he's ever met. He speaks fondly of Mr. Alexander, pointing out how graphic design at the time was all completed by hand. "This was before the computer. We had to do all of our lettering, separations, calligraphy – all of our designs – by hand."

It was also during his undergraduate experience at Northwestern that John was first bitten by the pottery bug. He had known for a long time that he wanted to be an artist, but he always envisioned a career in advertising or some form of commercial art.

One day, John was walking by the pottery studio at the university. "There were about twenty wheels in there, and there was a huge pot on every wheel. I looked at those, and was fascinated. I thought, I've got to do this. So, I took two pottery classes as electives." Later, when John was offered the temporary teaching position at Bastrop High School, he discovered that the art department was already equipped with the beginnings of a pottery studio. He was able to eventually expand the pottery program, and as a result, pursue his ultimate calling as a ceramics teacher.

Shortly after beginning college, John met and married his life-long love and wife, Patty. As with all commitments, marriage brought a sense of urgency and seriousness to John's career goals. He completed his bachelor's degree in graphic design in four years, and began pursuing employment. At this point, John describes his and Patty's financial situation succinctly, "We had twenty-five bucks in the bank. I had to get a job and start making some money."

Within a few months of graduation, John was offered a job with the Fitzgerald Advertising Agency in New Orleans. The Fitzgerald Advertising Agency was established in New Orleans in 1926 and still exists today as a result of a merger with Beuerman Miller Group in 2002. The new company is called Beuerman Miller Fitzgerald. The job offer, for John and Patty was a prestigious godsend, but, as fate would have it, not available to John until January of the following year. He would be forced to wait 6 months to begin work, and his $25 was not going to go far, even in the early seventies.

First Teaching Position

John received word through a co-worker at Northwestern, of a job opening for an art teacher in Morehouse Parish. In 1970, the Superintendent of Morehouse Parish Schools, Elva McClery, was a very enlightened and forward-thinking woman, who believed that the arts were important to the education of all children. John's interview with Mrs. McClery went well. "She was fantastic." He was hired for one semester (August through December), and he entered a high school art classroom for the first time that August. He was happy to have a temporary job that would provide an income until he could accept the position he really wanted with Fitzgerald in New Orleans. At the time, he had had no education courses, was not certified as a teacher in the state, and had never taught a class in his life. He did, however, have a B.S. in advertising design, a strong background in the arts, was creative, and was relatively enthusiastic about the position. At the time, art teachers were difficult to find, and the school board made the decision to allow his appointment for one semester, based on Mrs. McClery's recommendation.

Over the course of the next few months, Patty obtained employment with the school system as well. The couple was given a certain sense of security by their new positions. As John said,

> In January, I was going to go to New Orleans and the job that was promised me at the advertising agency. But then I got to thinking about it. My wife had a job. We had insurance. We had a place to stay. We had three months off, and all of the school holidays. I had all of this other

time off to work on my art. What can you do? I thought, 'this is great.'

After the decision was made to stay in Morehouse Parish and turn down the job in New Orleans, John began work on obtaining his teaching certificate. He completed that certification at Northeast Louisiana University in 1972, and, in addition, completed a Master's degree in Art Education, with an emphasis in studio ceramics. As a result of his continued education, he was given salary increases, and he learned more about teaching students. John remained at the same high school teaching position until his retirement, 33 years later.

University teaching position

In 2004, John re-entered the classroom as an adjunct professor of ceramics at the University of Louisiana at Monroe. The full-time ceramics professor had been named the Head of the Division of Art, and was unable to fulfill all of his previous teaching duties. John was hired to teach one ceramics course per semester, and to fill in wherever he was needed in the department. He has found a home at the university. He has been well-received by both the students and the faculty. When asked about his university students, he contends that the college students are more resolute about their work. "Most of them are art majors who are working on a degree path, they have a goal in mind, and are generally more serious about their work than my high school students were." John feels that being involved in the university environment, keeps his own work fresh, and his attitude positive.

John currently shows new work at two separate galleries in Louisiana – one in Ruston and one in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He is also an active participant in all faculty exhibitions at the university. He always considers himself, first and foremost, a teacher, however. He attributes a great deal of the knowledge he possesses today as an artist to the early teaching experiences he had in the Morehouse Parish school system.

TEACHING EXPERIENCES AT THE HIGH SCHOOL

The first few years at Bastrop High School were learning experiences for everyone involved. John's classes were always popular with students, however. The students initially filled his classes because they were electives, and all of the students had to have a certain number of electives in order to graduate. At least, on paper, apparently art classes sounded to the students as though they'd be fun. After a few years at the high school, however, John's classes gained a reputation for being both fun and demanding, and there were waiting lists every year for art at the high school. According to John, there was never any talk of eliminating the art program, apparently due to the student's obvious interest in his classes.

Funding for the Art Department

Equipment issues were always a concern. When John took over the program in 1970, a previous teacher had begun equipment acquisition for a ceramics program. John added to that initial ceramics equipment and eventually built the ceramics program in Morehouse Parish to the status of the number one program in the state of Louisiana. He

was able to augment his program with the help of a creative suggestion to the administrators at the school.

John noticed that many of the students at the high school did not participate in the regular school lunch program. A small concession stand was available to these students, and many of them only purchased a soda and chips for their noon meal. The concession stand, however, had been mismanaged and was losing money. The principal and John were discussing it one day, and John offered his services as manager of concessions if the administration would agree to give 1/4 of the proceeds to the art department. The principal agreed, and John turned the concession service around. He initially kept the business open during the lunch hour and after school. Advanced art students were asked to assist John, especially during the busy lunch hour. It consistently made a profit, and John was able to purchase among other things, potter's wheels, pug mills, paints and canvases for the art students. In addition, the concession stand profits funded John's annual high school art competition, which demanded a qualified outside judge and prize money for the winners.

Increased Respect from the Administration

After a time, John had garnered a certain amount of clout with the guidance counselors and the administration at the school. While the entering freshmen filled his classes on a first-come-first-serve basis, subsequent art classes were populated upon John's recommendation only. The sophomore, junior, and senior students were selected for art based on John's experience with them as freshmen. Subsequently, the senior art students were only the most talented art students at the school. They were considered a

fairly elite, and relatively small, group who received advanced instruction from John. He prided himself on being a creative teacher, providing his students with all of the latest advancements in the field, while conforming to the national and state standards for the arts.

Professional Development

From the very beginning of his career in teaching, John became a member of the Louisiana Art Education Association and the National Art Education Association. He attended the annual state conference every year, and considered it very beneficial to his career. It was at these conferences that John became aware of national and state content standards for the arts and how important maintaining those benchmarks in the classroom could be to his students. Although these standards were never imposed by the Morehouse Parish School Board, John generally maintained his classroom according to the state and national guidelines. After establishing his program as the state ideal, John ultimately led pottery workshops at the annual state conference for other art teachers, as well.

Community Service

In addition to his affiliations with the art education associations mentioned, John volunteered his time for many community organizations. He was, and remains today, a member of the Board of Directors of the Snyder Museum, a parish museum which houses both historical exhibits and local and regional art. He became a member of the Board of Directors of the Main Street Program for Bastrop. He was also a talent evaluator for the

Louisiana State Department of Education in the area of art, and sat on the evaluation committee of the art curriculum development project for secondary art sponsored by the Louisiana State Department of Education. He became President of the Morehouse Parish Arts and Crafts Association, and was a school board member for a Catholic school in the area. His offer of community service only enhanced John's standing in the community and at the school.

Personal Exhibitions

In addition, shortly after taking the high school position, John began exhibiting his pottery at both the local, regional, national and international level. He won many awards as well. His work was shown in Louisiana - New Orleans, Monroe, Bastrop, Baton Rouge, Port Allen, Shreveport, Mer Rouge; in Arkansas - El Dorado; in Missouri - St. Louis; in Florida – Belaire; in Canada - at the Canadian National Exposition in Toronto; and in France – at the International Identite Ceramique Conference in Auxerre, Yonne. His awards included first place at the Central Louisiana Arts Association Show in 1973; Clay Artist – America's Best at the exhibition in France in 1985; Best of Show at the Bastrop Fall Arts and Crafts Show in 1987; Outstanding Individual Award for the Designer of the 1989 Northeast Louisiana Arts Awards; and Outstanding Artist nominee by the Northeast Louisiana Arts Council in 1999. He was guest artist or featured artist in multiple exhibitions from 1973 to the present. In later years, John taught himself glasswork and began to exhibit and market his glass creations throughout the state. His work has been featured in numerous regional newspaper articles, and statewide travel magazines over the years. John's personal creative activity and the publicity it received,

served to engage both his school and his students in ever higher aspirations for the arts in Morehouse Parish.

Political and National Events

While the arts were being promoted to higher levels in the area through many of John's creative endeavors in the early years of his career, John faced some trying national issues with regard to integration and racial tensions. Morehouse Parish is an area that lies adjacent to, and just north of Ouachita Parish and the city of Monroe. In 1970 the U.S. Census Bureau calculated a population of 32,463 in Morehouse Parish, compared to about 31,000 today. In 1970, the racial make-up of the area was 56% white and 43% African American, with 26% of the population falling below the national poverty level (Morehouse Parish, Louisiana, 2008). Forced integration in the public schools in the south, reached Morehouse Parish in 1970, and racial tensions peaked. Boycotts by white parents, demonstrations, racial riots, and smaller skirmishes on campus occurred in northern Louisiana. John described it as a "turbulent time" at most of the schools in the area. He attributed much of the tension to the fact that Bastrop High School was one of the first schools in the entire area that completely integrated its campus almost immediately after being given the federal order to do so. He pointed out that there are still schools in nearby Monroe, which even today retain a predominantly African American population. At Bastrop High School, the merge was complete and timely. He remembered that a fairly complete acceptance of the transition by the community took about five years. "The more years you are with other people of differences, the more you begin to understand them. You then learn to get along with one another. It takes time for

the healing process. And educating the parents was a process as well." Because John's childhood was spent in an integrated community, he always had both black and white friends. In his art classroom, John faced very few racial issues, even though tensions were high all around him.

Racial turbulence has improved. However, as John was quick to point out, racial tensions seem to flair cyclically. In December 2006, Jena High School received national attention because of an altercation between black and white students. Jena High School, located about 70 miles south of Bastrop High School, is comprised of 10% black and 80% white students. One white student was allegedly beaten by six black students, thus the black students were named the "Jena Six." In September, 2007, more than 20,000 protestors marched on Jena, constituting the largest civil rights demonstration in the nation in years. This demonstration sparked widespread national attention (Jena Six, 2008), and emphasized the fact that racial tensions are still very real in north Louisiana.

Students' Responses to the Violence

John felt the need to attempt to resolve these racial differences from a point early in his career. Apparently the students shared John's sentiments for the desire to get along with one another. The 1973 Bastrop High School class yearbook, whose theme was Dawn '73, was prefaced with the following quote,

> Dawn holds no fear, hate, or malice. It shuns the evil darkness and illuminates each new day with hope and peace. Every day at B.H.S. brings new challenges and hopeful dreams of a better tomorrow; free from the

> violence and prejudices that have scarred former generations. We would like to think of 1973 as the beginning of our beginning… (The Ram, 1973).

Some of this violence was reflected in the student's art work at the time. John remembers that many of the students constructed cartoons that were reflective of students dealing with racial issues, or of young people being drafted to go to Vietnam. "Some of the students would do pictures of soldiers and death. They would draw popular musicians, and drugs and smoking were also prevalent in their artwork." John encouraged group discussion during class critiques. The student comments were always lively and interesting. One of the most important advancements in art education in the last decade has been the use of Visual Culture Art Education in the classroom. In this curriculum strategy, the students explore many aspects of our culture including areas involving television, movies, politics, advertising, celebrities, and the internet. In his way, John was ahead of his time by allowing his students in the early 1970s to explore and discuss heated political and cultural issues of personal relevance in his art classes. However, John did not approach VCAE in a formal way and was unaware that VCAE would become a prescribed approach to art education within the coming decades.

Teaching Art

Even though some violence was present at the school in the early '70s, John remained focused on his art classes. His goals included making certain that his students were exposed to the fundamental elements and principles of design. These basics were an important foundation for the students, before they were able to move on to figure

drawing, portraits, and more complex landscape designs. The students were exposed to a variety of media including graphite, oils, acrylics, watercolors, pastels, and clay.

The idea that his students were becoming creative thinkers was important to John. He emphasized this "thinking outside the box" in his classes. In many of John's classes, a project was presented, and then the students were asked to expand the concept, or relate a new direction to the original presentation. The students were encouraged to use their sketchbooks for creative and imaginative thinking. John recalled using thumbnail sketches with almost every assignment. Thumbnail sketches are small, quick, often gestural sketches, which an artist uses in order to visualize a number of ideas rapidly. Thumbnails have often been called an artist's shorthand, or memory aids to assist artists in remembering certain things about a subject (About.com, 2008). Selected thumbnail sketches are then enlarged and expanded upon in greater detail in order to further the artist's ideas. After some exchanging of thoughts regarding the different thumbnails, John directed the students to begin their work of art. Some of the students worked on paintings, some on pottery, some on more developed drawings, but all projects began with the thumbnail – or brainstorming session.

Emulating great works of art was an important learning tool in John's early classes. He encouraged his students to both study and copy masterworks. In this way, art history was integrated into the lessons. "Through copying, the students learned about style, and about the master artist's thought processes. But I never allowed the students to show their copies in an exhibition. These were only considered valuable learning tools." John recalls a lesson in which he introduced the mid-century Abstract Expressionist, Jackson Pollack, to his pottery students. Pollack was no potter, but the students, after

studying Pollack's canvases, created ways to imitate his technique through the application of various ceramic glazes.

The students also copied from magazine photographs in order to learn to see. At the high school level, John always felt this was acceptable. Again, it was a learning device, used to teach the students how to draw objects and perspectives in a more realistic manner. The actual practice of copying reality – no matter whose original composition – was seen as a positive exercise. Later on, the students were encouraged to create their own photographs from which to work. This became especially relevant with the advent of digital photography in the mid-90s.

John also emphasized craftsmanship. Along with design, taking pride in the execution of well-crafted works of art are the two most important things that he taught his students. "You have to have both. I would have to say, that even if a student used all of the elements and principles of design on a piece of pottery, and the craftsmanship was not there, the project would not be considered successful."

Student Exhibitions

The high school students were rewarded every year with an annual exhibition that included virtually everything they had created during the course of the school year. This was an enormous undertaking. The entire gymnasium at the school was transformed into exhibition space. The planning and implementation for this show began months in advance. Most of the students, at least beginning in January, worked toward a goal of producing art that was worthy of the annual student show. Many of the students couldn't afford to have every work of art framed, however, so they learned to mat their work. The

matting was done with a hand-cutter – a primitive technique, but another effective learning tool. To John, presentation was of utmost importance. If the student's work was not properly matted, it was not accepted in the show. John also provided substantial prize money, through the funds he raised with the school's concession stand, and through student art fees. The competition was a healthy motivator for the students.

A Typical Day

John taught about one hundred art students every day. John's classes were sequentially organized as Art I – beginning drawing; Art II – advanced drawing; Art III – beginning pottery; and Art IV – advanced pottery. However, many of the students who were enrolled in Art III and Art IV, and were classified as juniors and seniors, were allowed to work independently in their chosen medium. This system allowed more advanced students to pursue more creative options in the art classroom.

At the end of his normal class day, John usually attended general faculty or committee meetings. His day normally began at 7:30 a.m. and ended around 4:00 p.m., with no break during the day due to running the concession stand during the lunch hour – a long day for anyone. Upon returning home, John usually napped for about an hour, and then made his way to his backyard studio, and his own work. After several hours in the studio, his usual day ended at around 9 or 10 p.m. John never really felt too exhausted to work in his studio, however. He always retained relative enthusiasm for his own projects, in spite of the heavy class schedule he maintained during the day. He attributes much of this enthusiasm to his students. They unknowingly, kept him excited about his own creative endeavors.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

John worked in the public school system for thirty-three years, before his retirement in 2002. His tenure included some fairly turbulent times in the history of our nation, including integration of the public school system and the Vietnam War. Today, John seems to enjoy reminiscing about his early teaching experiences, how drastically schools have changed, and how very coincidentally they remain the same. In general, John recalled fewer changes in his art education experience over the past 30 years, than either of the other two participants in this study. His overall view was that changes did occur along the way but, in general, most factors have remained relatively unchanged.

Technology

The most dramatic changes in John's classroom came with the advent of the computer, and the prevalent use of technology in the classroom. This change occurred during the last 10 years of John's tenure at Bastrop High School. John chose to use technology as a new art form, rather than just a teaching tool. He made a digital camera available to his students, and thus started a photography course at Bastrop High School. The students were not allowed to take the camera home, but during their regular art classes they were allowed to take photographs on campus. Their photographs were then downloaded onto the computer in the art room, and the students learned certain software programs to both manipulate and print their photographs. Their photographs were submitted to competitions, and won many awards. While John changed very little in his core curriculum over his 33 years of teaching, when new exciting techniques presented

themselves, such as digital photography, John enthusiastically offered them to his students.

> It's best to have some of the old and the new, in combination. But, if I had to do it all over again, I'd rather do it on the computer. Just like if you had to sit down and do calligraphy, would you rather sit down and do it now or would you rather go on the computer and just punch in what you want. The computer has made it easy. I see it as another tool, just like a brush or a camera.

Technology also changed the daily routine at the school. Emails and websites replaced lesson plan books and written newsletters to parents. All of the day-to-day routines were streamlined and expedited.

Technology also changed general student knowledge, as John recalled. "The internet, computer technology, and being able to search out information immediately on the computer was an important change. When I was in school, we had to go to the library and check out books. Everything is so much faster today." John sees the students as more informed today, because of this faster technology, than they were 33 years ago.

Students

John did recall that, with some cyclical variation, students in general remained the same over the 33 years that he taught art in the public school system. John remembers very little change in student motivation. "I think both generations had their desires and motivators. So I would say that students haven't changed much in that respect." John

emphasizes that some years students were less motivated, and some years more motivation was present, but, in general, the motivation-level has not changed.

John felt a higher level of frustration with students who could not "see." In other words, he felt a very high level of anxiety with students who worked through his program and were still unable to grasp the concepts being taught.

> I'm frustrated when a student can't see. People look at things, but they don't see things. My job as an artist is to teach those students how to see. Instead of just looking at something – they have to learn to see -- see the details, see the shadows, and see the different shades of colors. It's just like opening a whole new world to them when they can learn to see that. And, if they can learn to see that, then they can learn to draw. Then they can learn to individualize what this world is all about.

Although John has always dealt with a significant number of students who were seemingly unteachable, again he does not remember that their numbers increased or decreased dramatically over the course of his career.

> Occasionally, I would get a class of students and I'd just think, 'Wow!' For instance, the class from 1970-1973 was an amazingly talented class. Sometimes, I'd get classes in which 5 students out of 100 would go on to become art majors. That's a lot. That's more than a coach gets with

> pro-athletes. If I'd get 2 or 3 a year that were really exceptional, I'd feel lucky. I generally had that every year.

Once again, John emphasizes that the primary difference that he sees in students today lies in their access to technology. "The biggest change is in the knowledge students have today. They come to you with computer technology and internet access already."

Racial tensions

While the Jena Six incident has been a wave of racial division that has rocked the relatively smooth relations enjoyed over the past three decades in north Louisiana, in John's opinion, racial relations have improved in the last 30 years. John saw marked improvement in the 1980s and 1990s in racial tensions. He remembered that people just seemed to gradually get to know one another and eventually work together in a more socially acceptable way. Tensions at the high school began to ease in the late 1970s and made noticeable improvements until the time of his retirement. Very little racial tension is apparent at the university where John is currently employed.

Administration

As John gained more and more respect from the community, the support of his administration increased. Although, John readily admits that he never really lacked support. He was sought out from the beginning of his career by a visionary Superintendent who was enthusiastically attempting to begin a model art program for her district. Subsequent Superintendents also offered full support for John's program, but

John never disappointed either. At retirement, John's art department was considered among the finest in the state, and his ceramics department was deemed the best.

School Environment, Parental Involvement and Classroom Management

Once again, John saw technology and the advent of the computer as the primary change in the daily routine at the high school. Emails and websites replaced lesson plan books and written newsletters to parents. All of the day-to-day chores were streamlined and expedited. Parental involvement changed because they were able to monitor their child's progress more closely through the internet. Security at the school was monitored through computers and cameras. Everything seemed much safer than in previous years.

TEACHING TODAY

John retired from the public school system in 2004, but continues to teach one beginning pottery class at the local university. This researcher senses that his real loves are being in the presence of art students and being involved in an active, creative, learning environment. John admitted that he sees this as important for an artist – to be in the presence of other creators. He gains a great deal of knowledge and support from his university students, and from fellow faculty-members. They harvest a wealth of information from him as well.

JOHN SUMMARIZED

This study has shown that John has perceived some significant changes over the 33 years of his career as a high school art teacher. John was this researcher's first art

teacher in 1971. During that time, a great deal of respect and admiration for him was formed. This researcher's high regard for John remains the same today, but this study has revealed so much more about him. In addition, this study has shown the high degree of esteem owed any high school art teacher today. On reflection, John can be thought of as *a creative rebel* more than anything. He was progressive, autonomous and self-determining for so many years. Having never taught a class before, and with virtually no art education background, he was thrown into a fairly large, regional high school which needed an increase of enthusiasm for its virtually non-existent art program. He fundamentally created his own future. The administration and the school board essentially left him alone. By John's own admission, the administration:

> …didn't know anything about art. They never bothered me. They never said I had to teach the National Standards or the State Standards for the Arts. I knew about those because I was a member of the National Art Education Association and the Louisiana Art Education Association, and I was teaching them, but the administration never said I had to.

John was a well-intentioned art educator who took it upon himself to impose the National Standards in his classroom, with virtually no stipulations by the school board or the administration. John can be likened to Donald Forrister, as characterized by Tom Barone (2001):

> Slowly, carefully, patiently, Forrister has succeeded in shaping formless adolescent talents into aesthetic

> sensibilities of impressive maturity. Almost single-handedly he has created a high school arts program that is not only outstanding, but – perhaps even more remarkable – cherished by both the school and the county communities. Any such embrace is, we know, quite rare in an era in which the arts are often treated, in Jerome Hausman's (1970, p. 14) phrase, like 'unwelcome boarders in a burgeoning household.'

The Morehouse Parish School system, seemingly, experienced a stroke of good fortune for having found an art teacher who was principled and who adhered to the national and state standards as diligently as did John.

This study of John revealed that, because of this interview process, he was able to recall many perceived and dramatic changes in his classroom over the last 33 years, particularly in the area of technology and racial and social issues at his school. The interview process itself, seemed to enhance John's own reflection about his teaching career, and this reflection has been shown to augment the act of teaching in general (Raunft, 2001; Grauer, Irwin, & Zimmerman, 2003; Jaksch, 2003). John indicated, however, that both art education and his art students have remained essentially the same over time.

John enjoyed almost total autonomy in his classroom. He had little or no guidance from his supervisors. His choices made sense to him, however, and were reflective of his education, experience, and knowledge of his pool of students over time. His program was perceived as excellent by both the administration, and regional and state

evaluators, and many of his students seemed to benefit from being engaged in quality artistic endeavors. A future study of some of his past students (Barone, 2001) is warranted.

MARY

Photograph 4.3

Photograph 4.4

Art and education are two of the most noble achievements of humankind (Smith, 1996).

Standing at what one would guess to be all of five feet tall, this dynamo of an art teacher seemed a towering presence as she walked into the room for her first interview. She evoked self confidence and control, framed by what was later perceived as a veil of softness for her students and for the discipline of art. Command in her classroom is one of Mary's strengths, and her students are fully aware of her authority. Her love of art, and its importance to her students, however, is always foremost in Mary's mind, and that's what drives her. "I get rewards every day. When you've got that student that is

just not getting it, and all of the sudden it clicks, you can visually see it in their demeanor -- in their facial expressions. That's my reward. Somewhere in our society we've gotten so busy that we don't value our arts. We lose so much."

LIFE HISTORY

Early Life and Education

Mary's early life was checkered with a kind of nomadic transience. Mary was born in Denver, Colorado, in 1952, the stepdaughter of a heavy equipment operator, who moved his family from Colorado to North Carolina and Florida, and to almost every state in between, in order to continue his employment. During her formative years, the longest she was ever in any one place was five years in Tampa, Florida, for fifth through ninth grade. By the time Mary was in 6th grade, she had attended 14 different elementary schools. Mary's family did eventually settle and she spent her final years of high school – sophomore, junior and senior – at the local high school, in the town where she now resides and works. She began her college career at Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe, but then moved again both to Florida and North Carolina. Ultimately she did return to Monroe and received her bachelor's degree at NLU in education.

Early Teaching

After her marriage and having children, Mary was faced with several difficult and life-changing decisions. Mary began her teaching career at the kindergarten level in a private school that her children attended. After six years at this position, certain problems arose with her own children at the school, and she and her husband made the

decision to withdraw their children. The administration at the Christian academy told Mary that if her own children were enrolled at public school, she could not continue teaching in her position. Mary then became a substitute teacher for the parish school system, in addition to working part-time for her father at the heavy equipment operation. After a short stint as a substitute, she was approached by the school board to teach special education students. She was basically unprepared for this position, but the school system had no one else. Mary worked as a teacher for students with verbal needs for three years. She enjoyed this position so much, and found it so rewarding, she returned to NLU with the purpose of obtaining her certification in Special Education. After much soul-searching, Mary realized that she would most likely be teaching for the remainder of her life, and that she should really pursue something that she was passionate about. "I really had enjoyed working with the Special Education kids. I have many in my classroom now – from mild to moderate, to autistic. They're great to work with. But, I really wanted to be certified in art. I knew that was in my heart. So that's what I did. And that's when I met Ron and Violet."

Early Influences

It was no accident that two of the teaching histories associated with this dissertation were interrelated. Violet's history follows this one, and Violet's husband, Ron, was a monumental, mentoring influence on the lives of many of the art educators in north Louisiana and central Mississippi. Violet set a very high benchmark, as well, for all of the art teachers in the area during her tenure in the Ouachita Parish School System. Violet's and Ron's training in Discipline-based Art Education techniques through the

Getty Center was the guiding force for art education in this area of the state. They led workshops and conducted seminars for educators throughout the area over the course of a ten-year period during the late 80s and 90s. Their influence changed the perception of art education for many who knew them. They were also a tremendous influence on Mary. Her biggest influences, however, were her family members.

Art was always present and revered in Mary's family. Both Mary and her younger sister were what she calls "artsy." Their mother encouraged them to stay busy and remain productive even during the summer months. The children were never allowed to remain unoccupied. "My mother believed that idle hands were the devil's workshop. During the summers, we did paintings, embroidery, crochet, or some other activity to keep us occupied. Mother felt that there was no sense in wasting the entire summer going outside and playing ball. So we were always exposed to some art."

Mary's mother had her own talents as well. As many mothers did during this era, Mary's mother made all of the children's clothing. She had a far more creative technique than most, however.

> When we were living in Louisiana, we would go to into the Palace try clothes on. We didn't buy the clothes from the Palace. My mom would sketch off those dresses. She would go home and take that pattern and make our clothes. So our clothes looked just like the clothes in the store. I have a bad habit now, when I go to a craft fair or a museum, I'll sit down and sketch the ideas that I see.

The Palace was a very upscale multistoried department store located in downtown Monroe during the middle part of the twentieth century. It has since gone out of business.

Mary's first exposure to a legitimate art class was in 7th grade. She consciously remembers the feeling that she had of being able to suddenly express herself in a more interesting way. "I was so in love with art in 7th and 8th grade." Her junior high teacher was a positive force who would give her a direction and then let her go her own way with the project. "He was constantly positive and showed me instantly if I was going off course. He'd say wait, this is not going to work. Once you saw it, you got to run with it." This seventh grade teacher inspired Mary in many other ways. She recalls the first tesselation project she was given.

> I did radial design tessellations. I still give this as an assignment, because when they (the students) create that pie piece and they constantly flip it and make it match, they come up with this design that is pretty amazing. To see their faces when they finish that radial design – it's like they can't believe they did it.

In high school, Mary's experiences with art changed. The art teacher apparently didn't appreciate Mary's vocal presence in the classroom. Because Mary talked too much in art class, she was transferred to choir as an elective and then, subsequently, to drama. "I had an A in art. I could talk and work. It didn't bother me, but it really bothered the teacher." Mary loved the speech and drama classes, and she excelled in those areas as well. "My mom said I could argue my way out of anything. I loved

speech. My drama teacher told me I was going to make a lawyer someday." Mary found her real calling, however, when the drama classes began working on set designs. She excelled at painting backdrops for the theatrical productions.

Higher Education

Mary continued to pursue her love of painting and three-dimensional design when she returned to college to gain certification in art. She took a convoluted path in order to find her way to art, however. Along with her aforementioned foray into Special Education, she also had the idea that she wanted to become a photojournalist. A sampling of photography classes did not satisfy her, but photography was in the fine art department, and it helped to guide her toward her true calling – art education. Initially Mary, a photography major, was required to enroll in a barrage of studio courses. Among these courses were Basic Design, Figure Drawing, Painting, and Sculpture.

The Sculpture Class

Of the studio faculty Mary was introduced to during this time, several became hugely influential in her life, and others are now only uncomfortable memories. Louis, the Basic Design professor, was very encouraging and inspiring to her. She remembered Louis as a very nurturing, sensitive teacher. Mel, the sculpture professor, also became an early mentor, although she encountered many challenging difficulties along the way in the sculpture class. "Mel would give you just enough rope to hang yourself." She recalled working diligently on one particular project, and then, in the end, discovering an unexpected fatal flaw.

> I found some flag rock glass. Dr. Mel allowed me to experiment and play around with light and my glass. He told me to go ahead with my idea, after I had presented him with some preliminary sketches. But, after I got all of the materials together, which consisted of wood and rock, the piece became so heavy I couldn't pick it up. It was going to be a piece that was eight feet tall, and I was making a cubicle for it out of wood that was four feet by twelve feet. I was going to put lights in the cubicle and light the glass. But it was so heavy. I had all kinds of problems. One of my friends, a very large male student, helped me to get the piece in and out of my car. He ended up injuring himself in the process. I ultimately titled it 'The Stop Light From Hell.' But I did finish it. My son still has it.

Mary credited many of these early teachers' influences with guiding her teaching strategies today. "When my kids start things, I give them that open ended directive, just like Dr. Mel did for me. I tell them that as long as they meet certain criteria, they've got it. Then I just let them go."

The Painting Professor

Another teacher who made an impact on Mary, albeit negative, was the painting professor, Robert. Robert was an intimidating rather than a liberating force in Mary's early college career. She commented that, "he could make you feel like an idiot at

times." Mary was admittedly more of a realist painter, and continues to enjoy this style of painting today. This was not a popular style of painting in Robert's classrooms in the 1970s. Robert constantly attempted to persuade Mary to relax, to become looser with her brushwork, and to work toward more abstraction.

Robert embarrassed Mary publicly in class during a memorable group critique. The assignment was to complete a painting based on the work of a master artist. Mary chose Georgia O'Keeffe. She realized that this was, in hindsight, an unfortunate choice, considering the sexual implications that have been associated with O'Keeffe's work, and the fact that Mary was raised in a fairly strict Pentecostal home. At the time, Mary was innocently unaware of the widely held belief that O'Keeffe's work was overtly symbolic of female genitalia. Of course, Robert's immediate comment was something to the effect that Mary's painting looked like an aerial view of a penis penetrating a vagina. At the conclusion of this public humiliation, the conservative, and heretofore sheltered, Mary retreated to her seat and attempted to hold back the tears. Mary's perceptions of the events that transpired that day, however, were that her fellow students were empathetic. Subsequent students, during the same critique, began to confront Robert openly. This served to lift her spirits and give her more courage. It was an event that she never forgot though. It also prepared her to shape the method of critique that she uses in her classroom today. Admittedly, Mary teaches at a junior high and works with very young teenagers. Because of Mary's background, she would never find it appropriate to introduce the subject of sexual genitalia to this age group. Mary did learn an important lesson that day in Robert's classroom, however. She would never humiliate a student in front of their fellow classmates.

During the entire time that she was working under Robert's tutelage, she only received positive feedback twice. Robert's comments were encouraging once for a red nude, and once again for an abstract piece that she eventually sold. She was ultimately able to muster the courage to confront Robert about some of his views and to question many of his suggestions. At the college level, this was a healthy step for Mary who was struggling to express herself through her art. At the end of her certification process, Mary did realize a positive response, from what she perceived as an initially negative atmosphere in Robert's classroom.

Violet and Ron

As mentioned earlier, probably the two most influential teachers in Mary's life were Ron and Violet, who introduced her to DBAE, a love of art education, and true enthusiasm for her art students. Ron also had an impact on Mary's husband, Lynn, who is by nature very shy. "Ron would encourage Lynn to come to the museum tours with me. Initially, Lynn would go to the museum with me, but he would stand in the corner and not say anything. Finally, he became comfortable talking about art. Now, he can look at artwork and give his opinion."

It is apparent that Mary, like the other two teachers addressed in this study, was impacted by the teachers to which she was exposed. Not only did these early mentors affect Mary's artwork and career path, they also made a lasting footprint on the teacher she would soon become. After entering Ron's art classroom and his summer workshops, and gaining an understanding of what art education was meant to be, Mary realized her own career path. She would be an art teacher. This was her calling.

EARLY TEACHING

Mary's classroom today is well appointed and organized. She has an abundance of shelving and good lighting. Her room is large, with big work tables and comfortable seating for her students. Her situation has not always been so well supported, however. Her teaching career began in a very humble manner.

Art from a Cart

Mary's first art teaching position was at a 6th grade school in Ruston, Louisiana, about 30 miles west of Monroe. She taught art from a cart to 390 6th graders. This was an uneventful year that was made memorable, primarily because of the daily commute. "It was kind of a nightmare because if I forgot something from home I was in trouble. Generally, on Sunday night I did a checklist. But if I forgot something, I had to totally change my lesson plan for that day." After the principal realized what a difficult thing it was to teach art from a cart, he gave Mary a corner in the gymnasium.

> Three days a week, I had a corner in the gym without interruption. Two days a week, they had P.E., and we had to dodge basketballs. I had no tables, so the principal had some men put up sawhorses with plywood sheets on top for me. The kids stood and did art in the corner of the gym for 45 minutes. I've gone through some major changes in my classroom over the years. I'm in heaven now.

Kathleen E. Connors (In Fehr, Fehr, & Keifer-Boyd, (Eds.), 2000) documented the stories of first-year art teachers being relegated to the corner of a dark basement, a hallway with no sink available, or the only passageway to the school cafeteria. Research has shown that many art teachers are not given adequate facilities in which to teach their classes.

The following year, Mary was asked by the superintendent of schools for the parish if she would accept a position at the local high school. The veteran teacher, who had been at the school for many years, was taking a sabbatical, and the superintendent needed a strong teacher to fill her position temporarily. Mary would have her own classroom for the first time.

Teaching at the High School

Mary recalled the first day she walked into her own art classroom at the high school. "I don't remember being nervous. But it was terrifying knowing that I was responsible for these high school kids." This fear that first-year teachers almost all experience was elaborated upon in narratives mentioned in the literature review by Codell, 2001, Kane (Ed.), 1991, and Gould, 1991.

Mary was given two fine art survey courses and an Art I class that year. These were considered general, entry-level courses. They were important, though, because the courses were preparatory for subsequent, more complex art work. The high school art courses were designed as components of a sequentially, layered curriculum. Mary knew that without a good foundation in her classes, her students would not fare well in the higher level art courses. Mary felt the pressure. Her students would in the following

years, enroll in Art II, III, and IV, which at the time were taught by Ms. Furr, a veteran art teacher, for whom Mary had great respect. She wanted to do well.

The high school class became a good fit for Mary. Yes, there were some students who were "dumped" into art simply because they didn't do well in any other class. Art seemed to be the class where the administration sent all of the problem–children. Mary was genuinely happy to be there, however. She had few discipline problems at the high school. She attributes her age to gaining the student's respect. Many of the high school students did know her because her own children were in high school at the time. Her familiarity did not excuse any misbehaving in the classroom, however.

> A lot of the kids knew me. They quickly learned though, that Ms. Mary wasn't going to take anything. They knew I was tough. I had a bluff in on some of them and some of them I didn't. But, I wasn't intimidated my first year at the high school the way I was during my first year at the junior high. I loved high school because when you gave them the directions, and you went over the instructions, and then you gave them that open-ended project, they grasped it, and ran with it."

Mary very much enjoyed her year at the high school. The students were engaged in learning, and Mary had a supportive administration. Her next position, however, would prove to be the most difficult year of teaching she would ever experience.

Teaching at the Junior High

After her temporary position at the high school was complete, Mary was assigned a teaching position at the junior high school. The year was prefaced by an ultimatum from the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Bryant. Mary remembers that Mr. Bryant informed her that the previous year had been a contentious one in the junior high art class. The former teacher never gained control of the classroom; discipline issues arose and virtually no learning had taken place in art, at least as far as he could see. Mary was told that if Mr. Bryant did not see an improvement in the art classroom, the district would no longer offer art at the junior high. Mary felt a great deal of pressure to perform well.

Mary never knew what had happened at the junior high the previous year – she still doesn't know. Almost immediately upon the onset of the school year, she made certain assumptions based on the actions of her students. The students apparently were accustomed to misbehaving, and were obviously familiar with essentially having a free hour during art class. Mary, ever the disciplinarian, conveyed the message to her students right away that their behavior would not be tolerated in her classroom. They discovered very quickly that this was a different sort of art teacher with much higher expectations than those they had encountered previously. The first year at the junior high was not an easy one for Mary. She recalled many confrontations with both students and administrators.

> The first year I was there, I had a kid in my classroom that was sixteen or seventeen. He stood up and told me, 'You've got it all wrong lady.' I said, 'Enlighten me.' He proceeded to tell me that if he stayed in his seat he would get an A, if he didn't he would get a B. I listened, and then

> I told him that he had to understand something. First of all, you need to take a check on what I look like. Your art teacher last year was young – I'm old. Your art teacher was skinny – I'm fat. She was tall – I'm short. You need to understand I'm not your art teacher from last year. You either do the assignments, or you fail. The first six weeks of the year, I had thirteen Fs in the class. It scared me to death because of what Mr. Bryant had told me.

In addition to many problems with the students, Mary had administrators who were apprehensive about the art classes. Every hour, on the hour, one of the principals walked into Mary's classroom. In hindsight, the principals most likely were checking on Mary, not because they were questioning her teaching ability, but to keep in check any similar discipline problems that had most likely arisen the year before. Mary, a relatively new teacher, didn't perceive the situation in that way, however.

> I didn't know what had happened the year before, and I didn't know what they were expecting. I just wanted to do my job, but I was severely intimidated. The first six weeks of school, I quit every day. I would go home crying. I tried to find another position that maybe had miraculously opened up. I called the school board and told them I didn't want the junior high position. I practically begged them to give me something else. This seemed like hell to me.

Budget concerns

Other problems surfaced almost immediately. As with many other art teachers, including John and Violet, Mary was asked to teach her classes with virtually no budget. She discovered, indirectly, that she essentially had no money to purchase supplies. When Mary took the position, the principal let her know that all of the art supplies for the classroom were paid for through the student art fees. She was told by the principal that she couldn't purchase any art supplies until the student fees were collected. At that time, each student paid $5.00. Mary collected the art fees, and deposited about $800 in the bank. She assembled her order and submitted it to the bookkeeper for the school. The order was never approved, because the accounting department informed Mary that the art department still owed $398 from the previous year. As a result, Mary was forced to limit her supplies to about $400. $400 had to somehow cover art supplies for 170 students for a full year. She was incredibly discouraged and disappointed that no one in administration had informed her of the budget deficit. Characteristic of many art teachers (Connors, 2000), however, Mary was both creative and resourceful at procuring supplies.

> I went to Paula [Ms. Furr], and I said, 'I don't know what I'm going to do.' She gave me all of the paint that she had not used in her classroom the year before because she was ordering new paint anyway. She rarely used green, and the company always sends a free half gallon of green, so I had lots of green paint. I went to Sherwin Williams and bought house paint that was mistinted so that my kids could paint. I tried to get red, yellow and blue so that we could mix the

> other colors. I got it for about $2 a gallon. I went to the newspaper and got roll ends of newsprint so we would have some paper to work with. One of the printing companies, Central Printing, was getting rid of a lot of card stock, so I got that for free. We painted on anything that was available. I got some plywood donated, and we painted Christmas cards for people's yards, sold those, and generated some more money for supplies. I wrote a grant to buy one set of paints for each of my 8th grade classes – I had three 8th grade classes. That was one set of tubes of paint for each class – it wasn't much, but it was something. We couldn't afford canvases, so I asked Mr. Bryant if I could take the ceiling tiles out of the ceiling so we could paint those. I went to the Masur Museum, because I had worked there teaching summer and afternoon workshops, and I begged them to allow me to borrow their easels. I put those borrowed easels around my room. The 8th graders were so excited to have easels to work on.

School Environment

In addition to budget concerns, the art classroom itself left a lot to be desired. What had been originally the home economics room, the converted art room was inadequately small. After her first year there, Mary was happy to be working with a new

principal, who seemed to realize that 42 children could not work comfortably in a room that was meant for 24. Depending on the art project, the sink stopped up on a regular basis – more often if the students were working with clay than with paint. Mary bailed water out of the sink and through the adjacent window more often than not. Plumbers were called if the situation became dire, but they rarely arrived in a timely fashion. For four years, Mary worked without hot water in her classroom. Finally, one day someone discovered that the breaker had been tripped for the hot water heater years before. "We finally got hot water, and believe me that was a godsend in the winter time." Once again, Mary's history confirmed that many art teachers, particularly new teachers, are asked to teach under deplorable conditions (Connors, 2000). Elizabeth Delacruz (2000) also addressed workplace conditions for art teachers. Her study suggested that most art teachers simply learn to cope with the situation they are given.

Positive Accomplishments

Mary endured, however painfully, that first year at the junior high. It was not easy, but in the end, she saw some positive results. Mary realized that the students had had so much freedom during the previous year, and that the "word was out" that art was an easy class, in which not much was required. A significant re-education of both administrators and students as to the importance of art was in order. Mary wanted everyone to realize the considerable contribution art could make to the curriculum, but she had many obstacles to overcome in order to get there – not the least of which was her own unsure attitude. She was tenacious, however.

When the students finally began to understand what was expected of them, a certain amount of talent began to emerge from some of them. "…it was amazing to find the ones that really wanted to learn. They began to control the students who didn't." The general behavior of the classroom began to improve. Creativity and learning began to take place.

One day, after she had obtained the borrowed easels, the 8th graders were busy painting their ceiling tiles. Mary had given the class a master study assignment. Mr. Bryant walked into the classroom that day and everyone was working diligently at their easels.

> The kids were so into it. …I was walking around the classroom, nobody was talking and everybody was working. He came in and didn't see me at first, because I'm so short. He stood at the door and called out my name. I said, 'yes sir.' He called me out in the hall and asked me why I had not done this sort of thing at the beginning of school. These kids are really engaged in this project. I let him know that the discipline problems were so great in the beginning that I could never have accomplished this at that time. It took time, and the students had to learn the basics before they could move to painting. He said, 'great project, they're really focused.'

Mary was understandably proud of what she had accomplished with her class, and the Superintendent's comments, albeit minimal, were significantly reinforcing.

A few weeks later, the students had completed their ceiling tiles, and they were replaced in the ceiling. Mary thought it was important that she conduct a constructive, group critique with the class. She brought quilts and blankets from home, and spread them out on the floor. Mary asked all of her students to recline on the floor, and examine the ceiling that they had painted.

> We turned out all of the lights. Whoever was talking was standing and holding a flashlight on their particular ceiling tile. This was an exercise that really helped the quiet child as well, because the attention was focused on the ceiling tile, and nobody could see their face as they spoke. No one was misbehaving. They were all talking about the artwork. Mr. Bryant once again walked in the door, and I thought, 'I'm fired.' His face told me that he had never seen anything like this before. But he didn't say anything.

At the end of this very difficult year, Mary went in to Mr. Bryant's office for her annual evaluation. He completed the review and asked Mary if she had any comments or questions. "I was so nervous. And I remember asking, 'Do I have a job here next year?' He just asked me, 'Why would you think you didn't? Well, of course you do.'" She never felt at ease that first year, and she never felt supported by the administration at the school. This seems to be a common theme, particularly among first year educators.

As mentioned in the literature review of this study, many administrators are untrained and inexperienced when it comes to art. Weitz and Suggs (2000) call it "Battle Five: Debilitated Administrators and Public Officials," and suggest that, "administrators often consider the arts 'extras' in education." They say "Political officials seem to have even less knowledge of art. With such crippling notions of art held by such powerful folks, art education remains stagnant or, worse, continues to slip into the abyss."

While reinforcement did ultimately come from the administration, Mary perceived that she was not accepted and, thus, felt unsure and unsafe in her position for the entire school year. A teacher with less self-esteem would have most likely caved under the pressure. As a result of this research, (Karge, 1993) (see Violet's Teaching History, Changes in Peers) it has been shown that many newly certified educators do indeed change vocations.

The following years that Mary spent at the junior high were a much more pleasant existence. The new principal was encouraging. Mary recalls that he gave her one of the finest compliments she's ever received. "We were working on a mural that he'd asked us to do. He was watching us work one day and he said, 'I didn't know what art was until you came to our school.'" This again confirms Weitz and Suggs (2000) commentary on administrators being unversed in fine arts and their impact on students.

Mary has remained teaching in the same school system for the past 16 years. She did change schools, but only because the student population became too large for the building in which they were housed. In 2002, two new campuses were constructed for the junior high students of the area. Mary was assigned to a new, well-appointed art classroom at that time.

The Gifted and Talented Program

One of the areas of the school system in Ouachita Parish that Mary had a tremendous impact upon, was the Gifted and Talented Program. Today, students are tested for this program, and based on said assessment, are placed in various advanced classes depending on their particular area of interest or level of achievement. This program was virtually nonexistent for the arts prior to Mary's intervention. Mary had encountered many students who showed promising talent in her classes; and she had always asked the counselors if there was any way she could have those particularly talented students in one class, together, so that she could offer them more advanced projects. After a time, the counselors worked with Mary where possible. The students were never tested and designated as Gifted and Talented, however.

Kelly – A Gifted Student

Then, in 1997, Mary had a very rare exception in her classroom. Kelly was a young lady who possessed an exceptional talent – the likes of which Mary had never seen before. "She was a child who could draw whatever she looked at perfectly – no matter what I put in front of her." Mary had a conference with Kelly's mother. "She's got more talent than I've ever seen." Mary realized that Kelly needed more than she could offer in her classroom. Kelly also had a difficult time expressing her feelings. She was very guarded. She found it difficult to use her own imagination, but she could draw anything that she wanted, perfectly. Kelly became a special mission for Mary. She was determined to have her tested and to find that special place for her.

Mary contacted some of her friends from the Louisiana Art Education Association who had worked with the Gifted and Talented Program. They all told Mary that if she had a student who showed promise, that student must be tested. Mary had requested that students be tested in the past; and the response from the school board had always been that they did not have the funding for testing. Mary learned that, by law, if the parent's requested the testing, the school board was obligated to conduct the testing. Mary pushed harder for Kelly.

When Kelly's mother approached the school board about testing her daughter for Gifted and Talented, she was once again told that they did not have the funding for this service. This time, however, Kelly's mother, with Mary's background support, insisted that her daughter be tested.

> That year, we tested for the very first time, and that's how we got Gifted and Talented in the parish system. We had either eight or nine children in the talented program the first year. Today we have over 170. Violet, one of my early mentors (and the subject of the following biography) was the first itinerant Gifted and Talented teacher in the parish.

While Mary does not teach Gifted and Talented art, those students designated as such are a part of her classroom three days a week. She is not able to spend exclusive, quality time with them in the same way that the Gifted and Talented teacher does. She does, however, assist in the recognition of said students. This has become one of her current areas of concern, as will be discussed in one of the following sections of this dissertation.

Satisfaction with Her Position

Mary's teaching situation has evolved over the past sixteen years into one that she considers self-fulfilling. She has worked to create a place for herself in the school environment and the community. She has defended art education at every crossroad along the way. As with many other art teachers, she has worked at educating the public, her students, and her administration as to the importance of the arts to the education of all – not just the gifted and/or talented. Today, she feels as though she has made some significant contributions, but there is still a great deal to accomplish.

TEACHING TODAY

Since the junior high population in Ouachita Parish doubled and then split in 2002, Mary's life as an art teacher has evolved around everything at West Ridge Middle School. Considered now a veteran teacher herself, she commands a greater respect than at any other time during her career. She receives much positive feedback from parents, administrators, her students and the community. As with any public position, though, there are always detractors. She still steadfastly defends art education to anyone in her presence, and her work ethic is impeccable. Her normal day is what many would consider a taxing schedule.

A Typical Day

Mary normally arrives at work between 6:30 am and 7:00 am in the morning. She uses this quiet time to catch up on grading or anything else that she may have fallen

behind on during the week. "I'm the slowest grader in the world. I've told my parents that. I have to grade each line that that child draws. It's hard to grade art. If we're doing perspective drawing, sometimes I have to measure each line. Please don't ask me to speed up my grading." Typically, Mary dedicates this early, uninterrupted, morning hour to grading her student's work. It will most likely be the only quiet time she will experience during the day, until well after dark. She knows that once the bell rings at 7:48 am, anything can happen.

This year Mary has 126 students. She sees each of them every day, except for the two days that 28 of her students work under the tutelage of the Gifted and Talented teacher. Mary teaches six, fifty-five minute classes every day. Her official day begins at 7:48 am. She is allowed 30 minutes for lunch, and 4th hour is her planning period. On most evenings, Mary does not leave the school until well after 6:00 pm. Recently, she has begun planning for her annual Arts Quest in the spring, and her days will be even longer as that project approaches. Arts Quest is a week of workshops that is reviewed in detail in a later section of this dissertation.

At one time her planning period directly followed lunch, and this allowed her a longer time to shop for supplies for her classroom. She visits the Sherwin Williams store weekly to gather any supplies that the store is willing to donate to her. If she does not have time during the day, then this task must be accomplished at night after school. Weekly trips to the paint store are currently being made on her way home in the evening.

Class Demographics

Mary's classes have been divided various ways over the years. Currently she has two classes that are exclusively 7th grade students, two classes that are only 6th graders, one 7th grade class with one 8th grader, and her last hour of the day consists of 19 -- 8th graders and one 7th grader. Her third hour class has one special education student and one resource student. During her 5th hour, Mary has two special education students, two resource students, and 5 – 504 students. 504 is a classification of students who have one or more of the following: attention deficit, hearing impairment, hyperactivity disorder, or behavior disorder.

According to the Louisiana Department of Education (2009), and the Division of Educational Improvement and Assistance, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act states the purpose of designating a student as 504 is: "To prohibit discrimination on the basis of a disability in any program receiving federal funds." Eligibility for 504 benefits is defined as: "A student is eligible so long as he/she meets the definition of qualified handicapped person, i.e., has or has had a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major activity, or has a record of or is regarded as handicapped by others." While this definition seems vague and non-specific to this researcher, Mary agrees that most students who are designated 504 do, indeed, need extra assistance. This does not, in general, make her job any easier, however. Mary openly expresses frustration with her 5th period class, but places blame directly on the administration and their scheduling. "That's too many [504 students] in one class."

Placing 6th and 7th graders together in a classroom has also presented its share of problems. According to Mary, sixth graders are so much more immature. The 7th graders quickly find out that they can intimidate the 6th graders, and they do so, on a

regular basis. The 6th graders always feel as though too much is expected of them, or, conversely, they attempt to work at the 7th grade level, and become discouraged. Mary feels that there are such dramatic differences in 6th grade and 7th grade maturity levels, artistic levels, and social levels, that they should never be combined. "Sixth graders are different. They're so silly. One of the girls thinks something is funny, and it ripples throughout the class. I find myself being so hard on those classes. I'm probably terrifying those kids, but I cannot let it get out of hand." Placing 7th and 8th graders in the same classroom does not pose the same set of problems, in Mary's opinion. She has asked her principal to address this aforementioned scheduling problem in the future.

Scheduling for the Gifted and Talented

Scheduling for the Gifted and Talented classes has also presented a problem for Mary. Because the designated Gifted & Talented students leave her classroom two days per week, Mary must introduce additional new lesson plans to the remainder of the class. As a result, two days per week the students are working on a different project. Scheduling difficulties seem to be evident at many schools, particularly for elective classes. Violet, whose biography follows, is one of the few art teachers who enjoys a well-balanced and efficiently planned schedule. Violet's school implements what her school district calls A/B scheduling, so the students only attend 4 classes per day, and each class is one hour and a half long. This scheduling seems ideal for educators who teach art and music, and whose classes necessitate extra hands-on time.

Changing Students

Mary's class size and demographics are constantly in a state of flux. Children are moved into her classroom on a regular basis for various reasons. The two most common rationales for moving children into art mid-semester are if they are performing poorly in another area of the curriculum or if their family has recently moved to West Ridge from another district. Only recently a young man was transferred to her classroom from band because he was not doing well. Mary became suspicious of the situation because two different administrators approached her about the new student.

> I knew then that he was probably not a good student at all, and had probably not gotten along with the band director. The band director eventually told me that he talked a lot in class and that he didn't complete his assignments. I told the student the first week that I was not his band director, and that I was not going to put up with it. Right now, he's a little afraid of me, but I have to get my bluff in on them, or I won't have control of the classroom.

Discipline in the Classroom

Discipline today is not generally a problem for Mary. She has a projecting and controlling voice; and she will admit that on at least some students, she uses intimidation tactics. She emphasizes that art classes must be even more disciplined than any other classes because the children are so mobile. They move around to get supplies and equipment like rulers, tape, or their portfolios. The children often move back and forth to the sink area for clean-up. "I cannot allow them to be playing around. They cannot

throw things like wadded papers in the trash cans. Something like that can disrupt the entire class." Mary makes certain that her students are aware of the rules of the classroom immediately at the beginning of the school year. Many of the rules are permanently posted on the art classroom walls. Her students also understand the consequences of breaking any of the rules. In addition to exercising control in her classroom, Mary has been a guiding force in art education in Ouachita Parish and the surrounding community for many years.

Arts Quest

For the past three years, Mary has been the impetus behind Arts Quest in Ouachita Parish. Arts Quest is a week long series of hands-on arts workshops offered to every K-5th grader in the Parish. A group of art educators descend on the local civic center every spring and conduct workshops for three full days, so that each student is exposed to both visual and performing arts at various levels. In addition, the students participate in writing poetry and short stories that are compiled into a complete and illustrated, bound version of all of the student's efforts. At the end of the week, an art exhibition and awards ceremony is held. The first year of Arts Quest saw over 3000 students participating. Attendance has improved since that time. This year, Mary is expecting an even larger group. It is a monumental undertaking that was Mary's brainchild for her school district.

The Beginnings of Arts Quest

A few years ago, Mary was asked to teach a workshop at Art Break in the Shreveport area. She was so impressed with the program that she came back to West Monroe with the idea of presenting it to her own school board for implementation. She knew that if she could push the idea through, the administration would have to take a more serious approach to art education in her school district. Arts Quest, Mary's designation for her version of Art Break, would help everyone to understand how important the arts are to education. It was not an easy sell, however.

Mary and a fellow art educator, Angie, asked for permission to attend the following year's Art Break in Shreveport, with the idea of gathering as much information as possible about the program. They were met by a representative of the program who knew their intention of starting a similar program in Ouachita Parish. He was very accommodating and escorted the two throughout the workshops, plays, and performances. Mary and Angie took photographs, kept extensive notes, and collected as many materials as possible. They made detailed notes on the logistics of the project including how children were bussed to the event, scheduling, and having specific support personnel available. When they returned home, they put together a proposal for the Superintendent of Schools. He was receptive and told them to proceed, but with caution. They were also told to work under the guidance of the arts coordinator for the parish. Eventually, they were given permission to hold Ouachita Parish's first Arts Quest, three years ago. Many mistakes were made along the way, but many successes have been documented as well.

Coordination of Arts Quest

Mary and Angie have been the co-coordinators of Arts Quest from its inception. The event begins each year with an introductory letter and schedule to all of the principals in the parish. The first year, about half of the schools decided not to participate. Mary expected a low turn-out the first year. However, they were initially planning on perhaps 200 or 300 participants; more than 800 came. Not only did they receive positive attendance the first year, but the participating schools were widely supportive. Mary and her group were given permission to proceed with Arts Quest for two subsequent years. Each year it has grown. This spring, 2009, will be the third year of the workshops, and it is expected to break all records for attendance.

The initial paperwork and planning consumes most of Mary's and Angie's time during the fall semester each year. At the time that the initial letters are sent out to principals, the teachers are also informed that the students can submit poetry, short stories, and illustrated versions of each for inclusion in the book of literary work that is published in conjunction with Arts Quest. Mary is passionate about this aspect of Arts Quest. "We need to show our kids that they're important and talented. Someone asked me not long ago why I publish all of the children's poems. I just told them that those children worked hard on their work, and publishing it in book form reinforces everything that they've accomplished." In addition to mailing the prospectus for the literary book, Mary and Angie contact art educators, gather their lesson plans, order supplies, reserve the site and busses for transporting students, and organize scheduling, months in advance of the actual event.

Sponsors for Arts Quest

A great deal of work is devoted to procuring sponsors for the event. The parish commits $10,000 to the event which pays for art supplies, publicity, and bussing the students. Mary needs sponsors to pay for printing costs, rental of the civic center, and prizes for the students. She is not above approaching almost anyone to donate to her cause. Mary always asks local businesses for assistance, but she has also approached the national corporations as well.

In most cases, if Mary places a large order with Sax or Dick Blick, the company will donate certain art supplies for her students to test. The first year Mary received a large number of drawing pens, tablets and pencil sets from Sax and Blick. These donated items were all used as prizes for the student participants. In most cases the prizes correspond to the student's entry. For instance, students who win prizes in the pottery category will receive a pound of clay and a set of pottery tools. The photography winners received frames or photo albums.

In addition to the donations of prizes, Mary has received a large contribution from CenturyTel each year, who pays for the publication of the literary works and for copies of all of the lesson plans for each of the educators who attend. This is an important aspect of the event because each teacher leaves with a book of art lesson plans that they can easily integrate into their present curriculum. In this way, Arts Quest is an educational event for all of the children of the parish, but perhaps even more importantly it is a professional development activity for each of the educators as well.

Mary has also asked for support from the local banks. This year, Mary is asking each bank to lease a student's work. The contract stipulates that the bank will pay to lease a student's work for one year to hang in their bank offices. Half of the lease goes

directly to the student/artist. The other half of the fee will go toward having the student's work professionally matted and framed. The bank is given its choice of artwork, and after one year the work is returned to the student. This particular prize is a veritable self-esteem boost for the students. Having their work on display in public, professional business offices for a full year is an award that gives each student who receives it a sense of pride. Once again, this particular reward reinforces Mary's aforementioned, overriding goal with Arts Quest, to help the students realize their own talent and abilities.

Arts Quest Theme

Every year Arts Quest has had an all-encompassing theme. The first year, it was bugs – "It Bugs Us Because We Don't Have Enough Art in Our Schools." Mary constructed an elaborate display of bugs and bug artwork at the entry of the civic center. Many of the lesson plans offered centered on the bug theme. This year the theme of Arts Quest will be "Art is Timeless," and Mary is asking the community for donations of any old clocks or watches that are available. She once again plans a large and inspiring display in the civic center arena in order to promote the theme of the week.

Memorable Moments from Past Arts Quests

Over the last three years of Arts Quest, many memorable events have occurred – logistical disasters, scheduling nightmares, special students, and some memorable art projects. Mary remembers a few of the most outstanding occurrences.

The first year of Arts Quest, one teacher brought in a group of drawings from her class that were all based on the life-cycle of a seed. "We couldn't tell what it was

probably because they didn't have an art teacher. But I thought it was wonderful and worthy, and I wanted her art work to be a part of the exhibit. So we included it. Our schools, in the past, have denied children the freedom to express themselves. That is so important."

Many of the students who attend Arts Quest have never been exposed to any form of art in the past. For instance, many have never seen a theatrical performance or a concert of any kind.

> The first year of Arts Quest, those children never budged when one of the plays was being performed. They were so into the performance. They [the participants] wanted to get on stage and show us some of their own dances. They just have never had the opportunity to actually go to a museum or to see live theatre.

Last year Mary was touched by a young student who won first place in one of the art categories. She was unaware of her win until she entered the exhibit hall and saw her work hanging in the center of the exhibition with a blue ribbon attached to it.

> She squealed so loud. We all thought something bad had happened. Her teacher ran to her. The child was in tears. I ran up and asked what had happened. Through her tears, she said to me, 'that's my work.' It was such an important moment to that little girl. She was from one of the smaller schools in the parish, and it was totally unexpected.

Mary has also inadvertently crushed some children's feelings who have participated in Arts Quest. Last year, there were so many entries to the literary competition that Mary was unable to type and display them all. She elected, instead, to only display the first place winners' works. Two sisters had entered the competition. One sister won a first place award and the other won third place. First, second and third place winners all receive a copy of the literary book, but only the first place winners receive a prize, and, more importantly, only the first place winners last year had their work displayed at the ending awards ceremony. The sister who received third place was devastated that her work was not shown at the ceremony. Their mother brought the omission to Mary's attention. This year, no matter how long it takes, Mary plans on typing and displaying all of the award winners' works. "They were so excited to see their work in a published book and to see their work displayed. The self esteem that's built is amazing. If the teachers could just understand that that positive is going to bleed over to other areas of their lives." Shown below are Mary and two of her colleagues assembling the art exhibition for last year's Arts Quest.

Photograph 4.5

Future Arts Quests

Arts Quest has become a large part of the year for Mary. As her brainchild, she is still inspired to make it more interesting and spectacular each spring. Her idea is to expand it even more and to include larger numbers of students. Every year new problems are encountered, dealt with, and improved upon. "The first year, we forgot to give ourselves a bathroom break." It is an event that has begun to show the importance of the arts to every child in Ouachita Parish. For this, she is very proud. It is also an event that links the entire community. "We as art educators have to get involved with our politicians. We have to get art in our schools. That's the whole reason for Arts Quest. We need to show our kids that they're important and talented." Many other art educators agree with Mary on the importance of becoming politically involved. Mira Reisberg (2008) cited a list of the most important knowledge essentials that any future art educator should possess. Her points 8 and 9 are: how to create allies with the community, and how to network politically (complete list found in Chapter 2 of this dissertation). Karen Keifer-Boyd (2000) stresses the importance of community and political relationships in developing an effective art curriculum. Dennis Fehr (2000) also complies with Mary's sentiments in his introduction to *Real-World Readings in Art Education: Things Your Professors Never Told You* when he states, "If art teachers want to make the world better, we must do more than decorate it."

Community Service

While the annual Arts Quest makes a significant contribution to the community as a whole, Mary believes it is important that her junior high students understand the importance of community service, as well. She has noticed that, of late, many more people are asking various art departments in the parish to become more involved in community assistance. This happens to be one of the primary areas of concern for the Community-based Art Education movement of the last ten years. An initial phase in one facet of CBAE is to recognize a need in the community and attempt to highlight or fulfill that need (Ulbricht, 2005). Mary, however, sees an even more important affect of CBAE on her individual students.

> It's important at the junior high level that the students get involved. Many times these kids get lost when they get to the high school. The high schools are so big. So, if I can get them involved at the junior high, they're more likely to make a significant contribution when they reach the high school level.

Bloodshare

Mary's classes have become involved in Bloodshare, a local organization that is involved in conducting auctions and fundraisers in order to support blood banks in the area. Mary's classes designed and painted chairs to be auctioned. Each student was asked to draw a design for an original chair. The designs were submitted and voted on by each class. The students completed seven chairs for the auction.

> We did a Mardi Gras chair which was the most grotesque chair you've ever seen. The chairs were all donated. Someone also donated upholstered chairs. So we painted those too. One of the children did Rousseau's, *The Tiger in the Grass* [common name for *The Dream* of 1910 (Janson & Janson, (1997)], and another one did VanGogh's, *Starry Night*. Somebody donated a stool, and we added to it and turned it into a giraffe. We got the stool out of the dump across the street. The kids loved it.

Light Up the Life of a Child

In addition to the Bloodshare fundraiser, Mary's classes have produced artwork for *Light Up the Life of a Child,* a community service project that raises money for children with life-threatening diseases. One of Mary's classes was given an old lamp for the project. The 8th graders were presented the broken lamp in class and asked to brainstorm as a group about the creative possibilities for the project. Ed Check (2000) supports the idea of student-generated learning and reiterated that allowing student agency assists in warding off boredom in the art classroom. Mary's 8th graders ultimately turned the lamp into a dragon sculpture which they constructed out of Crayola Model Magic. One of the girls took the lampshade and created a flame design using a faux stained-glass technique that Mary had taught in class. In addition to the dragon lamp, the students constructed a lamp out of a discarded wine bottle and a recycled lamp shade. Mary and the students beaded the lamp shade in order to create a more unified piece.

Other Community-based Service

Community service and CBAE have become an integral part of the curriculum at Mary's school. She considers Arts Quest her foremost community-based art project each year. Many other community projects have found their way into Mary's classrooms, however. For example, in addition to the aforementioned artworks, Mary's classes routinely participate in Relay for Life, a national campaign whose goal is to raise funds for the American Cancer Society (Relay For Life, 2008). While Mary enjoys the attention that community service brings to her students and her program, these projects can be time-consuming and can diminish the time she is able to spend on her planned curriculum. "We give and give, and they always want more." Mary emphasizes, however, that the people who benefit the most from these community projects are the student/artists themselves. "Community service aids in forming character and future, contributing adults." Mary's sentiments about the importance of community service projects are concurred by Karen Keifer-Boyd (2000), "In a community-based art curriculum, art becomes meaningful to students because their art lessons encourage pride rather than neglect toward their own aesthetic values."

Special students

A few special students over the years have surfaced as memorable personalities for Mary. Recalling special students, and their impact on the educator, is something that was important to Donald Forrister in Tom Barone's *Touching Eternity: The Enduring Outcomes of Teaching* (2001), which was reviewed in Chapter Two. While this book

focuses on the impact on his students of a special art teacher, the art teacher himself was also ultimately impacted by many of his students as well.

The first of Mary's students who came to mind was Kelly, who has previously been mentioned and reviewed, and whose work was the impetus for the aforementioned Gifted and Talented program in the parish schools.

Jenny

Another unforgettable student was Jenny. Jenny was an extremely gifted student, across the curriculum. Mary worked with Jenny for several years and realized her talent almost immediately. "She was gifted, both left and right-brain gifted." Jenny's family moved away and Mary did not hear from her for many years. Not too long ago, Mary received an unexpected email from Jenny. She is now a successful, professional artist involved in creating original website designs.

Twin Brothers

Not all of Mary's students have had such positive life histories, however. When Mary was teaching at the high school level, she had the opportunity to teach a set of twin brothers, who were both talented young artists. Both brothers were also good students and always made top grades. About six years ago, one of the brothers overdosed on drugs and died. The surviving twin was devastated. Mary heard about the incident but never had any direct contact with the family after the death. One Saturday morning, Mary and her children were doing their typical garage-sale junket, scavenging for

treasures for her classroom, when she noticed some artwork that was being sold at one of the homes. Mary recalls that she felt compelled by one of the paintings.

> This one particular painting bothered me. It was a triptych. It was painted in reds, sort of Asian inspired. There was a dead tree and some mountains. Lots of red, grays and blacks. Something about the painting just kept calling me back to it. Finally, I walked over and rearranged the panels. The owner came over to me and said, 'thank you for doing that.'

Mary started talking to the owner about the painting. She told the woman how much she liked the work. The woman said, "You should, you were his teacher." The woman, the surviving twin's mother, began to tell Mary about the teen's devastation at the loss of his brother, years earlier. His life was never the same. The young man, about 32 years old now, is unemployed, still devastated, and totally without direction in life. Mary left the garage sale without purchasing the painting, which was priced at $75.00. She still regrets not having purchased her former student's work.

Other Special Students

Mary recounted stories of many of her outstanding students during one of our interviews. Most of them have gone on to become successful, contributing members of society. Many have chosen professions in creative fields. As with many educators, Mary seems to savor their stories. It occurred to me during our time together, that Mary, like the two other subjects of this study, seems to measure her success as an educator by these

stories. She essentially lives to hear about her former students' accomplishments. Like John, an interesting follow-up study would be to interview some of these former students, and investigate the perceived impact that the subjects of this dissertation have had on their lives.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

Students

Mary was quite specific about the changes she has seen over the past 27 years in her art classroom. Her first and most adamantly noted change was in the students themselves. She feels that the junior high students that she works with today are much more immature than they were when she first began teaching.

> Fifteen or twenty years ago, when I had children enter my classroom in 7th or 8th grade, they already had a sense of their own independence. Even the first year that I taught 6th graders, they seemed more mature. Today, they're needier and needier. They're so dependent. They come into my classroom where there is more than one possible solution to a problem. It scares them to death. They want me to tell them the right answer. Every mark they put on the paper, they call me over to ask me if it's right. Finally, I just tell them I'm not going to look at their paper any more until they turn it in to me. I want them to do their own work. They're not as secure as they used to be. They

> have personalities, but not strong personalities. You're not seeing that strong teenager that you used to.

Mary was noticeably frustrated, when she talked about the changes in students, particularly at the junior high level. When asked what she thought was the cause of this lack of self-confidence, Mary gave a very sure answer.

> A lack of responsibility. I've got parents that get mad at me because I won't walk over and pull their child's portfolio to grade it. It's the student's responsibility to turn in their portfolio to me. If they don't walk over, pull it, make certain it's complete, and turn it in to me, I don't grade it. I don't care if it's sitting in their locker, 10 feet away from my desk. The student did not do what was required of them. So I don't grade it, and they get a zero. And then the parents complain. Parents are not requiring their children to be responsible today.

Parental involvement

The lack of responsibility that Mary has noticed among her students, relates directly to another significant change that Mary has seen over the last 27 years – parental involvement. At her school, Mary has seen more parental involvement in recent years. Many times this is a positive attribute for the school. Sometimes it is not.

> We have lots of parents making excuses for their children. Teachers get called to the principal's office more often now

> because some parent has called complaining that their child was not given enough support in some way. I don't get called to the office any more because I told my principal to tell those parents to call me directly. I'm not going to "baby" their children and pick up after them. I've got to get these kids ready for high school. That's my goal, to get them ready for life and for high school. So, I'm not going to look for things for them. I make them do their own work. Lack of responsibility is the biggest change I see. Both the kids and the parents want me to do more and more for them.

State mandates

The lack of responsibility shown by parents and students that seems to be Mary's biggest nemesis is sometimes exacerbated by state mandates. The 504 modifications that have been adopted by the Louisiana State Board of Education, in Mary's opinion, offer more excuses for students.

> We're giving our kids more and more crutches. I truly understand attention deficit, because I had it. Some of these students just can't focus for that long. They come into my classroom and say I'm attention deficit and I'm taking this and this medication. I say, that's great. Learn to live with it. Learn to focus. You can't use that as an

> excuse when you go to get a job. You've got to learn to control your behavior. We give our kids too many excuses. Instead of taking their children to the doctor and putting them on all of these medications, I say we should tell the children what we expect. I say in my classroom, these are the rules, these are the guidelines and this is what I expect. No excuses. Unfortunately, legally, our hands are tied with a lot of these kids. It's just not fair to the other children in the classroom that we have to make all of these modifications.

The percentage of children in Mary's classroom that were classified as attention deficit five years ago was lower than it is today; ten years ago it was much lower; and 30 years ago it was non-existent.

Lesson Planning

Mary has realized a change in the way she delivers her lessons as well. She has discovered that many of her students do not retain information audibly. The students' attention spans are not the same as they once were. Now, she writes the lesson on the board, the students read it themselves, and then Mary reviews the lesson again orally. She repeats this process every day, and with every lesson plan, because she feels that many of her students will not grasp the information otherwise. Mary is also very organized. She meticulously provides rubrics for her students to follow.

> I was lucky. I started out with a good foundation. I learned from Ron and Violet. They emphasized grading rubrics and the criteria that the students must meet on each project. I have rubrics for every project that I do. That way, if a parent comes in and questions me, I can show them what was required right from the very beginning. Also, the child knows exactly what is expected of him before we start.

Mary's delivery of her lessons has changed over the course of her career. She's become more aware of different learning styles. Her organization and lesson plan management has changed very little, however.

Mary still adheres to DBAE techniques. Since Ron and Violet were two of her primary mentors, and they were certified by the Getty Center in the 1980s, as trainers of DBAE, Mary's entire teaching regimen is grounded in DBAE. "When DBAE came out, it was a lot easier to teach because it focused on rubrics and criteria for art. With DBAE, you're also teaching history, science, language, and writing, so it was a lot different from the way we were originally taught. I've always used it and thought it was easier." This adherence to DBAE was confirmed at a national level by the La Porte, Speirs, & Young (2008) survey, discussed in Chapter 2.

Mary's primary objection to postmodern lesson plans focused on VCAE, multiculturalism or gender studies is lack of time. "You cannot make it through the whole textbook in a year if you teach it correctly. We rarely make it to pop art or anything beyond the 1970s. Last year we did talk about Keith Haring and George Rodrigue. The kids fell in love with these artists. But most years we don't have time."

Mary also perceives a problem with some possible ethical issues related to teaching VCAE. Introducing middle school students to some aspects of visual culture, in her opinion, could bring about strong objections from parents and the community at large.

While Mary's lesson delivery did change dramatically when she was introduced to DBAE in the 1980s; since then, she has continued using the basic DBAE techniques in her classroom. A marked change in her students' attention spans in the classroom has made her aware of different learning styles. Because of this change in attention spans, Mary has changed her approach to lesson delivery.

Professional development

Mary considers herself a perennial student. If a workshop is offered with some new, previously unexplored technique, Mary is the first one to sign up. That aspect of her professional development has never changed. She will always be ready to learn something new. She loves attending the Louisiana Art Education Association conferences and sharing ideas with other art educators. Mary has noticed, however, that many new teachers today do not participate in professional development activities. "I know many teachers who get their bachelor's degree and never go back for any professional development. I think professional development is going to make or break our teachers of the future, but it's not being done – at least at my school – the way it used to be."

Administration

When looking at art programs, one of the primary concerns of art educators is the attitude that administrative officials have toward the arts in their school. For many of these administrators, the arts can be simply a frivolous elective that is not considered a necessary component of the core curriculum. Supportive administrators can have a tremendous impact on any art program, as evidenced in both John's and Violet's biographies as well.

Mary has seen many changes in the administration at her school. As mentioned earlier, the first Superintendent under whom Mary worked kept a cynical and wary eye on her art program for the entire first year. As in Violet's story, Mary felt the need to prove herself, before she was given full support. In her early years of teaching, once her students saw some level of success, she was given more support by administration.

> He [the Superintendent] eventually became very supportive because he saw a difference in the way I taught, and the way the other art teachers had taught. My kids were entering shows, winning prizes, and bringing back first place ribbons. It made the art program and the whole school look good. He couldn't deny that.

In the early years, Mary remembers that her principals did not value the art lessons as much as they did other classes. Mary's classes were set up differently from the other courses in the curriculum. The administrators were apparently looking for a degree of standardization.

> We had to turn our lesson plans in weekly. They checked them. I never got a satisfactory on my lesson plans because

> I didn't write them like a math teacher or a language arts teacher. We had these big lesson plan books, and I couldn't write everything that I had to write in there. When we changed to a computer system, the same lesson plans were typed and I had enough space to write everything I wanted. I received my first satisfactory after that. It was the same lesson plan, but I'd never gotten that before.

Today, Mary enjoys a very supportive administration. She feels that she is appreciated by just about everyone at the school, primarily because she's proven herself over the years.

> My principal knows what these kids can do; he knows that if he's got a child that's just not working out anywhere else, he can send them to me. They'll straighten out and their grades always improve. Art is a place that you're going to get positive. It's not a negative environment. I don't have negativity in here.

Her principals visit her classroom today and look at the children's artwork, and give immediate, positive feedback to her students. "That means so much to these kids."

Mary points out that there have always been detractors. Currently, one assistant principal at her school, in Mary's opinion, does not value the arts. "He thinks it is just a waste. It's not important. He thinks it's just a crafts class. It's that place where the kids go and just play around. They don't really accomplish anything. I've never heard him say anything positive about anything that we've done."

In general, Mary remembers administrators being less receptive to the arts in the early years of her career. She has noticed a distinct improvement in the administration's attitudes toward art in the last 27 years. She attributes this change in attitude to the success of her program and the success-level of her students.

Peers

Mary has noticed a change in the commitment level of new teachers who are now entering her school. The veteran teachers seem to have more of a devotion to their students and their school, which Mary has not perceived among the newer teachers. She's notice that many of the newer teachers leave school as soon as the bell rings at the end of the day. The more senior teachers tend to stay after school and work with students after hours.

> The older teachers are more family oriented. And this is our second family. The older teachers are more conscious about how to meet the needs of the kids in the classroom. But, we have some new teachers that do their job, and then at 3:00 they walk out the door. Eventually, as all of us older teachers move on, you're going to have a faculty full of teachers that will teach and then just walk out the door. Some of the older teachers, take their work home, and then worry about how they're going to reach that child? They think about things that they can do. I just don't think the new teachers are being taught about that responsibility.

Mary also feels that art teachers, specifically, are not being taught a lot of techniques that she learned in school. She feels that many of our arts are becoming "lost arts."

> We're losing so many of our arts, like quilting and weaving. Too much emphasis is being placed on other things, like testing. Standardized testing is great, but teach the kids, don't teach to the test. How many of us actually teach block printing? Many of these young art teachers wouldn't do that, because they think it's too messy or too dangerous. They don't want to do anything that they're not comfortable with.

Mary has seen significant changes in her peers. The teachers who have been teaching for many years, in Mary's opinion, have a level of commitment that the newer teachers, in general, do not exhibit. She's also noted a significant change in art teachers. The newer art teachers are not willing to take any risks in the classroom. Mary feels that this lack of risk-taking is born out of inexperience and fear of failure in the classroom.

MARY SUMMARIZED

Mary is an, obviously, dynamic personality. One notices her outgoing nature immediately upon meeting her. She possesses a level of self-confidence in her chosen profession and the position she holds at her school, that is palpable. She fiercely defends both the discipline of art and her art students. She is now a veteran teacher who demands discipline in her classroom, but still accomplishes her primary goals of teaching children

to love art, and to value their own talents. While Mary denies aspiring to become anything besides an art teacher, my most prevalent impression was that she'd make a formidable arts advocate for the parish in which she resides.

> I didn't want to play politics. I did not go into education to become a politician. But, unless we show our community and our administrators how important art is in a child's life, whether it's drama, visual arts, dance, whatever, we're going to get cut. We have to make our art visible. We have to make ourselves known to the politicians. If you look at test scores for kids that have had art, most of those are going to be higher than the kids that haven't had art, because you've got a more well-rounded child. When you take art away from a child and you give them just the core, they're not well-rounded. There's a flat side. You've got to have art. Communities and business people need to realize that that person who has had art is going to fill that job better than the person who hasn't. When you get the community involved, the community can turn everything around and change our system.

Mary is accomplished; she is well-organized, and her students apparently love her. Any preservice art teacher who needs a boost of enthusiasm should spend a week or two with Mary and her students. Her passion for art, her students and her school is infectious.

VIOLET

Photograph 4.6

Photograph 4.7

Encounters with mentors and subjects can awaken a sense of self and yield clues to who we are. But the call to teach does not come from external encounters alone – no outward teacher or teaching will have much effect until my soul assents. Any authentic call ultimately comes from the voice of the "teacher within," the voice that invites me to honor the nature of my true self. (Palmer, 1998)

I feel like I've got the greatest job in the world, and I still do after teaching for the last 32 years. I love my school and my kids, and what I teach. I'm happy to go to work every day. Isn't that something?

(Violet, 2008)

Rarely have I been in the presence of a colleague who has been as truly inspirational as Violet. As I recall, that feeling of being inspired by a teacher or a mentor has occurred twice before. The year was 1986, and I had just months before given birth to my second child. At that time, the Head of the Department of Art at the local university saw my work and encouraged me, unexpectedly, to once again enter the formal

classroom environment in pursuit of a previously unfinished degree in art. That man, Mr. Adams, inspired me to pursue my dream, and I will always remember that moment in my life as being an important turning point. I have also been inspired in the past by a sense of place, during a photography workshop experience in the south of France. Again, the instructor in France challenged my aesthetic eye to look for frames of beauty and quality light in the Provencal landscape. The first time I realized that "seeing the light" was the magic of the entire photography experience, I felt truly inspired. Over the past few months during the interviews with Violet, I have once again, and unpredictably, found inspiration from a verifiable master teacher.

During our first meeting, Violet arrived with a rolling cart full of binders that were filled with documents that reflected many of the accolades both she and her students have received over the past 32 years. Prior to the interview, Violet was asked to bring any documents which chronicled or highlighted her teaching career. The sheer volume of credentials she has accumulated during her many years of teaching was overwhelming. But, far beyond all of the awards she has received, was the even more evident, pure and honest passion she feels for her chosen profession. Her love for her school, for art, and for her students bubbled out with each interview. I departed our first meeting with a mountainous collection of information stored on many audio tapes that took long months to transcribe and assimilate. She literally cannot stop talking about her students and her school. That kind of passion is rare, particularly in an occupation that seldom offers rewards to its participants. Where had that passion originated – her parents, an early mentor, or perhaps her husband? It would soon be discovered that her love for art

education emanated from numerous sources and that her chosen profession has changed a great deal over the past 32 years.

LIFE HISTORY

Early Life and Education

Violet was born in Izmir, Turkey. That was the first of many surprises about the diminutive, but dynamic woman who sat before me. She had been an army brat and the eldest of five children. Her parents were originally from Mississippi, but the family ultimately lived in many different locations across the United States. Violet's father was a satellite communications expert and worked directly for four different U.S. Presidents, from Eisenhower to Nixon. His direct responsibilities included setting up communication systems for each of the presidents in order to facilitate the broadcasts of presidential addresses to the nation. Violet spent her elementary years in Camp David, Maryland, the presidential retreat. While Violet's mother was a stay-at-home mother, her dad was gone quite often. Although Violet herself never met any of the presidents – she and her siblings were very young at the time and weren't allowed on the base during the times that the presidents were present – she was obviously proud of her father, his many acquaintances, and his profession.

Violet attended schools in Maryland, New Jersey, Mississippi and Arizona, before returning to and graduating from high school in Carthage, Mississippi. She attended Hinds Junior College in Raymond, Mississippi, receiving an AA Degree in art. She then matriculated at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, where she received a B.F.A. in art education, followed by a master of education degree in art from

Mississippi College in Clinton. During the course of her formative years, Violet was influenced by several key figures who played important roles in her education.

Early Influences

Family

Violet's first major influence was her mother. Violet's mother was a traditional 1950s-style mom who stayed at home with the children and took care of the home. In addition to all of her other responsibilities, Violet's mother was an accomplished seamstress.

> Of course I colored and drew all the time, but she (mother) would sew dresses. She sewed all of our clothes and she would drop everything on the floor in her little sewing room and we would play around her feet. I remember picking up all of her pieces and my sister and I making things with the scraps she had left over.

Violet considers this one of her first really creative experiences.

> We didn't have enough money to buy those fancy furniture doll houses for Barbie, so we made them. Dixie cups were our chairs and the Kleenex boxes were the beds, and we would turn our whole bedroom into Barbie's condominium city. And, of course, we made all of Barbie's clothes from the fabric scraps that my mother had given us. So, I

> remember creating from the time I learned to sew with my mom.

Violet recalls that these initial creative experiences began when she was in second grade.

Other early influences were Violet's siblings. Violet and her sisters played "teacher" as children. "I really wanted to be a teacher before I wanted to be an art teacher." Violet and her sisters created classroom scenarios in their bedrooms on a regular basis. Violet and her older sister were the teachers, and the younger sisters were the students. "We practiced a lot." The desire to become an art teacher, however, never really entered her mind in her early elementary years.

Violet and her siblings also decorated the family home for the holidays. Her sisters were creative as well. The children drew pictures of Christmas trees and presents at Christmas which were displayed all over the family home. At Thanksgiving, the girls built turkey centerpieces for the dining table and created name cards for the family meal. The family did not have much money, so their mother was only able to offer the children simple art supplies, such as construction paper and crayons. Violet and her sisters always managed to make the home look festive, however. The creativity was definitely present, but the formal art training would come later. For the first time in her life, Violet was exposed to a certified art teacher in a school setting when she entered the 6^{th} grade.

J. Ulbricht speculated on this idea of "invisible art teachers" in his 1999 essay. Ulbricht explored the idea of informal and undocumented art teachers by suggesting that children can learn a great deal from, and be highly influenced by parents, siblings, and other community members during their formative years. Violet was obviously exposed to such invisible influences.

Early Elementary and Secondary Teachers

Two sixth-grade teachers impacted Violet's future creative career. For the very first time, Violet was offered formal art lessons from an art teacher at her school, located in Sabillasville, Maryland. An itinerant, Mr. Douglas, was a part of Violet's classroom for six weeks. During that time, Violet learned to draw from life. Mr. Douglas took the class on outdoor field trips for landscape drawings. Violet began to develop her eye for draftsmanship. Prior to Mr. Douglas's arrival, Violet engaged in her own drawing and coloring activities. She drew cartoons and colored in coloring books. "We colored in our coloring books, which we shouldn't have, because I'm very anti-coloring book today." Mr. Douglas made Violet realize that she had the ability to draw objects much more realistically. She could recreate nature, while many of her classmates could not. This was an important turning point in her life.

Violet's full-time classroom teacher in the sixth grade was Ms. Smithfield. Ms. Smithfield recognized early that Violet was a very creative student and, because of that, designated her as the bulletin board expert. "She gave me encouragement and made me feel that I was special. So, she was the first real teacher that I consider one of my great teachers because she thought I was so special."

Over the course of her education, Violet describes herself as "a perfect student. I never caused disruption in the class. I was a very quiet child. Sometimes those quiet children get pushed off to the side and are ignored, but Mr. Douglas and Ms. Smithfield made me feel special." This revelation makes Violet more cognizant of shy, quiet children in her classes today. She's aware of the quiet child's dilemma, because she was

one herself. During her discourse on these two influential teachers, tears actually began to form in Violet's eyes. She obviously owes a great deal to these two insightful educators.

Subsequently, Violet was exposed to very little formal art instruction in junior high and high school. She remembers one semester of art in the 7th grade, in which the class learned painting and batik techniques. A part of this exercise included cutting an orange in half, sketching it, and then painting it in an analogous color scheme. This activity led to learning color and, eventually, creating original batiks. Violet still creates original batiks today. She attributes her 7th grade art class and the exercise with the oranges to her love for batik and her propensity for implementing color in all of her work.

Most Influential Mentor

At this point in the interview process, Violet began rushing through her high school experiences, apparently so that she could relay as quickly as possible, the name of her favorite art teacher and the educator who, ultimately, had the greatest impact on her life. She met this teacher during her second semester at Hinds Junior College (now Hinds Community College). Violet recalled an event that had occurred the week of our first interview for this study. "Thursday night, I took some of my high school students over to see the opening of the Hurricane Katrina photography show that was being displayed at the local college. He walked in, and I just announced, 'This is the greatest art teacher that I ever had.'" Once again, tears came to Violet's eyes as she began to talk about Mr. Bob Dunaway and the role he played in her early college years.

Violet's father was an engineer, and as such encouraged all of his children to pursue areas of study that related to math, science, and computer programming. When she entered Hinds Junior College, Violet, always eager to please, enrolled as a computer programming major. She remembers, "I didn't even know what a computer was." But, she trusted her father's instincts. Over the course of her first year at Hinds, Violet gave computers an honest effort. She enjoyed all of the math courses, but had an obvious aversion to computers and accounting. She began to take a scrutinous look at her academic strengths and weaknesses. Violet based much of this self-evaluation on her discovery of left-brain and right-brain dominance theory in her early years of college.

Middle-brained Dominance

In the late 1970s, Betty Edwards published *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* which transformed the perspective of many art educators and psychologists. Based on Roger W. Sperry's brain research conducted during the 1950s and 1960s, Edwards theorized that people are either left-brain dominant – analytical, linear, logical, language-based – or right-brain dominant – visual, spatial, relational (Edwards, 1979). Violet made the discovery during those early college years that she was a little of both. She's still convinced today.

> I'm a middle brainer. I have some left-brain dominance and some right-brain dominance. I think that's been a large part of my success. A lot of artists are totally right-brain dominant individuals; they find it difficult to write

> curriculum, follow schedules, or stay organized. I don't have those problems.

As a result, Violet believes that she excelled in math, but did not possess enough of the left-brain dominant characteristic to manage the computer programming and accounting courses. They were just too far left for her, as an artistic and creative individual.

The Change to Art Education

Amid much agony and many tears, Violet approached her father about changing her major. She told her dad that the only thing she knew she could do well was draw. She announced to him that she wanted to be a cartoonist and work for Disney. Her dad, understandably and predictably, responded with negativity, telling Violet that she'd never make it; the competition was too stiff and she'd never make a living being a cartoonist. She begged her father for a chance. She left the meeting with an agreement, that he'd give her that chance, but he insisted that she find a level of success in this area of study. Violet describes this encounter as a "very dramatic conversation." She pointed out that her dad had four other children to educate, four of whom were girls. He wanted all of his children to become self-sufficient.

After this, Violet went back to Hinds, with an objective of making "art" work, so that she would never have to take another computer or accounting course again. She also felt the additional burden of showing her father that she could be successful and make a living at art. "I always wanted to please my parents, and a lot of that comes from being the first child. And you want your parents to be proud of you. It's a lot of pressure." I felt a great deal of empathy for Violet at this point in her story. I, too, received a degree

of pressure from my father to "not major in art." I heard, on more than one occasion, the tired expression from my dad, "How can you make a living in art?" I never really had an answer. All of his arguments were rational, as were Violet's fathers. I also hear the same sentiments from many of my current students, whose parents are in the process of attempting to persuade their children to change their major from art. While, I would never presume to intercede between a parent and child, I do voice my empathy to these students. The only real answer to give them is that they must follow their own inclinations and make their own decisions about their career directions. Violet's story emulated my own and reinforced the determination she must have possessed in order to follow her course.

Mr. Dunaway's Advice

With this goal in mind and the seeds of determination in her heart, Violet met with the head of the art department at Hinds Junior College, Mr. Bob Dunaway. She walked into Mr. Dunaway's office that first day and told him that she wanted to be a cartoonist. His response was, "Very good." He told her to take Art I, Design I, and Drawing. Mr. Dunaway said he'd monitor her efforts in these courses, see what kind of results she achieved, and then they would meet again and talk about cartooning.

After the first few weeks of the study of art, Violet realized that she could really draw. She had chosen cartooning because she knew she was good at it, but now she realized she could be a "real artist." "I could do figures. Contour drawing was the thing that opened my eyes. Teaching me how to see and just funneling my drawing into the contour, opened up the whole world of art for me."

In addition to being the head of the department of art at Hinds, Mr. Dunaway was also the president of the Mississippi Art Education Association. He took a group of his art students to the state convention that year and Violet, along with the other students, was introduced to other art teachers throughout the state.

> We found out that there was such a thing as being an art teacher. And I could get a job doing that. And I thought, this is it, if I could ever get a job doing anything, it would be as an art teacher. I have loved every minute of it – even the bad times. I feel like I've got the greatest job in the world. And I still do, even after teaching for 32 years. I love my school, my kids, and what I teach. I'm happy to go to work every day. Isn't that something? To this day, my mother calls and …asks how my day was. I always say, 'I love my job.'

Violet is shown below in Photograph 4.8 alongside Mr. Bob Dunaway at a 2008 award ceremony in which she was the recipient of the prestigious Thad Cochran Award for Outstanding Secondary Arts Teacher in Mississippi.

Photograph 4.8

BFA in Art Education

All of Violet's ideas about the direction for her life changed that second year under Mr. Dunaway's tutelage at Hinds Junior College. She met and later married her husband, Ron, in Mr. Dunaway's class. "Mr. Dunaway is about 75 now. He was the one who really set me on my way." After finishing her AA in art at Hinds, with a great degree of success, Violet moved on to a B.F.A. program in art education at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. Her father was pleased with her success, as was she. Ron, who was studying graphic design at the time, and Violet, together, researched colleges in the area, and found Southern Mississippi to have the best art program.

The University of Southern Mississippi had an unusually strong art program at the time. Far exceeding both Ole Miss and Mississippi State, both much larger schools, Southern Mississippi placed a premium on the arts, according to Violet's and Ron's research. Southern offered a B.F.A. in art education, which was rather unusual and was not offered by either of the larger schools. The art education department boasted the same number of professors as the studio area, which was also rather unusual for an art

program. "Each one of those art education teachers had a specific area of emphasis in art education. They taught us methods, and learning theory, and how to write curriculum – things that the studio people could not do." Violet felt that her undergraduate training in art education was very strong. She felt fully equipped to enter a classroom when that time came. Also, Ron eventually made the transition to art education, received a Ph.D. in art education from The Florida State University at Tallahassee, and is currently the art educator and Head of the Department of Art at Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi. While Violet felt very well prepared by her college education, her first classroom experiences were not without tribulations.

EARLY TEACHING HISTORY

First Teaching Position

Violet's first teaching position was in 1977, at an elementary school in Jackson, Mississippi. She and Ron were determined, upon graduation from Southern Mississippi, to both secure teaching jobs in the same area. They knew how difficult it would be to find an art teaching position, and to compound matters, they needed two jobs – not just one. Violet speaks frequently about how lucky she and Ron have been over the years in finding teaching positions at the same school or in the same school district. However, Violet also admits to their tenacity. "We are both very driven. We pursue what we want. We both also have a very strong faith in God; we relied on that faith every step of the way. We went to places where there were no jobs available and then, miraculously, something came available." Due to their determination, they have never lacked for employment. In order to increase their chances that first year, both she and Ron

submitted applications to every school district in the state of Mississippi. Ron received an offer from a junior high in Jackson, and Violet was employed by the elementary school. She was both thrilled and terrified at the same time when she first walked into her own classroom filled with second graders.

> I had prepared for four years for what to do, and written lesson plans, and completed my student teaching, but this was my own classroom. I remember those children coming in the room and sitting down; and I remember I taught them everything I knew in ten minutes. And I stood there and looked at them, and they looked at me, and I thought OK I've taught you everything I know. What do I do now?

Violet admitted that it took a full week to get through those initial apprehensive moments and the entire first year to develop her own pace. First year teaching experiences are often stressful as evidenced in the Literature Review in Chapter 2 (Codell, 2001) (Kane (Ed.), 1991). After she had met all of the 600 students in the school, she became more settled and relaxed. Then it was just a matter of doing the work. She made the decision that she would never be left with nothing to say to her students again. She did a lot of homework on her curriculum, she planned each lesson in more detail, and continued to break down each lesson into smaller and smaller parts. This extensive planning helped to alleviate any classroom anxiety she had. "Now I can't get it all in."

The excitement of being in the classroom, though, has really never diminished for Violet. From her first experience as an art teacher at an elementary school in Jackson, to her current position as a high school art teacher, Violet has never lost enthusiasm for her

subject. She described her first teaching position as one that was both exciting and frustrating:

> My beginning salary was $8,900. Ron and I thought that was a tremendous amount of money. It was at Stout Elementary in Jackson, Mississippi. I taught K-6, and I was the first art teacher the school had ever had. I established the whole program. I was so energetic and excited that I wasn't going to listen to people who said things were not possible – so I made things happen. They gave me a room and hardly any budget. I went and begged things off of the other teachers – supplies and equipment they had left over and weren't using. And I found a closet at the school that had some leftover art supplies in it. Then they sent the students to me. But, in the beginning, the classroom teachers just thought of art class as a break for them – and a lot of them still do. So, they would drop their children off to me and then come back and pick them up – very much like recess. I was only allowed to give the students an S or a U, and most of that was just for behavior and attitude. So that was the only assessment we were giving at the time. I think that's still true in a lot of elementary schools today.

Efland (1990) reviewed the difficulties that program evaluators have encountered when attempting to establish assessment strategies for art. The ambiguity of the discipline precludes strict regimens and is considered less of a priority at the elementary level in some districts.

Discipline in the Classroom

Discipline in the classroom was an issue initially, and Violet consulted some of the veteran teachers at the school for advice. The school was located in a lower socio-economic area of Jackson, and some of the students possessed less than ideal family lives. "I went to the toughest teachers in the school – the ones that had great discipline – and asked for advice." One veteran fifth grade teacher, who everyone at the school seemed to admire, told Violet, "Oh, they're going to do what I say or I'm going to kill them." Violet was not impressed with this advice. She remembered thinking that "killing" a student, or even threatening to kill a student, was not in any of the curriculum theory courses she'd taken at college. In other words, these veteran teachers were making it through their teaching days by using intimidation tactics in their classrooms. Violet realized that she would have to develop some discipline solutions that worked for her individual classrooms and ones that did not involve threatening the students, if at all possible.

Eventually, she worked out discipline strategies that were more operable. She began with just attempting to keep the students so occupied that they had no time to cause classroom disruptions. That worked well in most cases. She eventually settled on assertive discipline techniques, and those have proven successful for Violet for the last 32

years. Violet describes assertive discipline as making the students completely aware of the rules of the classroom from the very first day of class. The rules are clear, as well as the consequences for both good behavior and bad behavior. If the students choose to behave badly, they are fully aware of the resulting punishment. As a result, bad behavior becomes a conscious choice for these students. The key to enforcing discipline in the classroom is the consistency of the teacher. According to Violet, she learned very early to be unwavering in her consistency. Assertive discipline was developed by Canter and Canter in 1992 (Assertive discipline, 2008) and is heavily infused with a reward system as well. Students are consistently reinforced when positive steps are made in the classroom. In most cases, the assertive discipline techniques worked beautifully in Violet's classrooms. Some exceptions were noted, however.

The only regrets Violet ever faced in teaching involved discipline problems in the classroom. These were normally students who had suffered from an emotional trauma or who came from a less than desirable home life. These students, categorized as "at risk", and seemingly unreachable, only numbered a few over the past 32 years in Violet's art classes. She still feels the pang of regret, and a certain degree of responsibility and failure, for the handful that she believed she could not reach.

> I feel like maybe I failed that student. And I tried everything I could think of. Sometimes I could reach them and sometimes I couldn't. Learning could not take place in my classroom when these students were present. That was always my priority. Sometimes, in high school, they get to the point where they just want to be in the alternative

> school, and they're going to disrupt the classroom no matter what you do. They are almost adults, and they have made up their minds that they want to get kicked out of school. There's really nothing anyone can do at that point.

A Typical Day

At her first teaching position, Violet was responsible for teaching seven classes a day. Each class was between 30 and 50 minutes long, depending on the grade level. A typical day at Stout Elementary was to arrive at school at about 7:30 am, prepare all of the art supplies for the day, and position her lesson plans. "I was one of those teachers who did not want to be reprimanded. So if the principal happened to drop by my classroom, I wanted to have my lesson plans ready." Violet said that the good principals always dropped in to check on every classroom – even the art classes. "In elementary school, it was wild. The kids would come in fast, and I had to teach really fast, and I taught K-6. I was exhausted at the end of the day – even back then."

Motivating Elementary Students

In Violet's experience, elementary students need a lot of motivation. Violet remembered a word of advice from one of her college professors, "With elementary kids, you have to have your facial expression on. Your expression has to show that you are enthusiastic and you really believe what you're talking about." Violet always gave her elementary students a motivational segment and displayed a lot of energy in the

classroom. She felt that it was important for those students to really think about what they were creating before they actually created it.

> My job was to help them to think and to grow in a creative and healthy way. So, if we were doing Thanksgiving turkeys that day, I didn't believe in giving them coloring sheets or tracing hand turkeys. That's boring and cliché. I would show them twenty pictures of turkeys, and we'd talk about how turkeys could be fat or skinny, or gobbly or googly. We would talk about the personalities of the turkeys and the size and the shapes of turkeys. And then we would draw the turkeys. I tried to spark their imaginations." Some of the students required more motivation than others, but Violet never did their work for them. She simply would instigate further discussion on the subject, until the child came up with an idea of his or her own.

Teaching Composition and Design

Violet also worked extensively with the elementary students on composition and design skills. She held lengthy discussions and classroom group critiques on the artwork. Sometimes a child's work was lacking a design principle.

> We would talk about their work. If they had a big empty space on the left side, I would say now where is that turkey

> going? If the child said to grandmother's house, then I would say I don't see that in your picture. The normal response would be, oh well I could draw grandmother's house on the left side that looks so empty. So sometimes I had to talk them into thinking.

This group criticism procedure with a strong focus on the design elements and principles is a hallmark of Discipline-based Art Education (DBAE), which is a content strategy to which Violet had yet to be introduced.

Administration

Even though Violet's classrooms felt energized and effective to her, she encountered some administrators who did not value the arts. Many of the principals with whom she worked at her earliest positions did not care about the arts, did not assess the arts, and never spoke to Violet about curriculum or objectives in her classroom. Unfortunately, things are still the same today in many classrooms that Violet has visited.

> Most of the time, the principals in elementary schools don't concern themselves with the arts. Isn't that terrible? I know that because I know several elementary art teachers who are teaching now that aren't even certified teachers, and it makes me angry. I want somebody to assess them, because they are just as important to the curriculum as math and science.

Subsequent Teaching Positions

After teaching at the Jackson elementary school for just one year, Violet and Ron moved on to a position in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Violet was teaching art at a junior high school, and Ron was teaching high school art. They retained those two positions for nine years. Violet was apprehensive about moving up to the junior high level, but handled the transition well. These years of teaching were relatively uneventful. She did come to some important conclusions during this time, however.

During her tenure at the junior high, Violet realized that in order to achieve anything with her art program, she would have to win over the administration. "You always want to keep the administrator and the janitor on your side." Violet gained the respect, admiration, and support of her administrators, not by fighting the system, but by methodically winning them over. Both her students and her program began claiming numerous awards at the regional level. These awards gained recognition for the entire school – not just the art program. The students were gaining self-esteem through winning awards, and thus they began to make positive achievement in other areas as well. The administrators began to take notice and recognize that the arts, perhaps, did make significant contributions to learning.

Inservice Workshops for Peers

In addition, Violet began to assist her peers in small but special ways. While she eventually attempted to avoid predictable routines such as making posters for the math teacher or banners for the football team (she felt anyone could do those things), she volunteered her time for what she considered more important -- teacher inservice training.

It was also during this time that she was hired by the school board as the art resource administrator for seven elementary schools. In that capacity, Violet conducted mini-workshops for her fellow teachers, demonstrating to them techniques for integrating art projects into their current curriculum. These inservice hours garnered a great deal of respect for Violet at the school. The idea of peer mentoring by veteran teachers is highly recommended in by Karge, Sandlin, & Young (1993) in an effort to prevent attrition among younger educators. Anything special that the principal wanted for the school and that she was capable of doing, Violet attempted to accomplish. This attitude has paid off in an enormous way for Violet over the course of her career. The junior high years, for Violet, were an important training ground for the years that lay ahead.

Teaching in North Louisiana

After the nine years in Vicksburg, Ron decided that he would pursue a Ph.D. in art education at Florida State University, so the couple moved to Tallahassee. Violet taught at a private day care school in Florida, while Ron was both working and attending classes. This was the only time in her long teaching career that she was not in public education. About a year after beginning the Ph.D., Ron was offered a teaching position at a northeast Louisiana university. He had a family to support, so he took the position, and continued to work on his degree, long-distance. He returned to Florida for three subsequent summer sessions until the degree was complete. During this time, Violet was also offered an adjunct position at the same Louisiana university. She taught two methods courses in art education and an art appreciation course. This was another learning experience for both Ron and Violet – being at the university level and working

side-by-side with one's spouse. Violet perceived this position as a positive atmosphere for both she and Ron.

Violet's inclinations were always to teach younger students, however, and when a position opened for an elementary art teacher in Ouachita Parish, Violet aggressively pursued the job. The position title was Elementary Visual Arts Specialist, and she became an itinerant art teacher serving 21 different schools. Her teaching certification remained reciprocal in all of the states in which she had worked, so gaining teaching credentials with each move had been just a matter of filling out the necessary paperwork. Unfortunately, her certification had lapsed due to the time she had spent at the university, and she was forced to go through the testing process again. "It was pretty scary. The art part was easy, but I had to go back and take math and science. That was what I was afraid of. With all of these young college students, and I in my late 40s, I was thinking, can I remember all of this stuff? But I passed it fine."

Violet was given the position of Elementary Art Specialist. She traveled in her van to 21 different schools over a five-year period. She manipulated her schedule so that each 4th, 5th and 6th grader in Ouachita Parish would have eight art lessons per year, based on the amount of time she was given. Every two to four weeks she moved to a different school and taught her art lessons from a cart. It was a taxing schedule and less than ideal for the students involved, but she managed to deliver art lessons to every upper elementary student in the parish. Some of the principals were welcoming, some were not. "It took a while to break into some of the schools – to convince some of the administrators of the importance of art. They had to get to know me." When Violet eventually moved back to Mississippi, the parish hired three art teachers to replace her.

Currently Ouachita Parish employs six full-time art teachers to accomplish what Violet was doing on her own for 5 consecutive years.

Discipline-based Art Education

An important development in both Ron's and Violet's teaching career occurred while Ron was attending classes at Florida State. Ron was working on his dissertation during the time that Florida State became one of four schools nationwide that was recognized for its use of DBAE (Discipline-based Art Education). This was the early 1980s, and Florida State was chosen by the Getty Center as a training ground for the new DBAE techniques. The training sessions became known as the Florida Institute for DBAE, and they were facilitated by Marilyn Stewart of Kutztown University in Pennsylvania. Marilyn Stewart is a widely recognized proponent of art education in this nation and a professor of art education at Kutztown University. She has conducted research and written extensively about the field, including her book, *Thinking through Aesthetics* (1997). She has been the keynote speaker at art education conferences in California, Virginia, Arkansas, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. Among her many other awards, she was also a visiting scholar, and honored by the Institute for Educational Management at Harvard University (Pennsylvania Art Education Association, 2007).

Because Violet was an art teacher and was married to Ron, she was invited to join the team, so she became a DBAE trainer as well. This opportunity was career-changing for Violet and served to solidify all of her ideas about teaching art into one cohesive approach. While Violet had not been formally introduced to DBAE techniques prior to

this opportunity, she recognized that she had been utilizing many of the aspects of the approach for years without being consciously aware of her direction.

> I always did studio, but I have to tell you that I was doing things in DBAE before they told me to do it. I had a very influential art history teacher, Mr. Jim Meade, at the University of Southern Mississippi. He didn't just make us remember facts and figures. He made us understand how the characteristics from a time period influenced the next time period – why an artist was important and how a particular artist influenced art history. He taught us like an artist would teach art history. So ever since then, I've always used a lot of visuals in my classroom. I have reproductions all around my classroom. The kids can't go to a museum, so I bring them the visuals. When I teach contour drawing, we look at a lot of Reubens and Michelangelo. I was doing all of this before DBAE. So was Ron. He had the same art history teacher.

Photograph 4.9 below shows Violet with her art history teacher, Mr. Jim Meade, at a 2008 award ceremony.

Photograph 4.9

Lowenfeld

Prior to becoming a DBAE trainer through the Getty Center, all of Violet's lesson plans were steeped in the child-centered Lowenfeld theories. "Until the mid-1980s, we were all strong on the concepts of Viktor Lowenfeld – The Stage Theory." The Stage Theory was developed by Lowenfeld in the 1930s and 1940s in America. Although Lowenfeld was of German descent, he is considered one of the early pioneers in American art education. His theories of artistic development dominated art education in the 1950s and most of the 1960s (Smith, 1996). Lowenfeld studied children's drawings and established criteria by which these drawings could be evaluated and conclusions drawn about the child's educational and psychological development. Lowenfeld also conducted extensive studies of drawings by children with disabilities (Lowenfeld, 1939). Many art educators, including Ron and Violet, at both the secondary and higher education levels, continue to utilize Lowenfeld's concepts in their classrooms. "Ron still lectures on Lowenfeld to his university art education students. It's useful for future

teachers to understand the psychological stages of development of children." Lowenfeld's concepts continue to be respected; however, a more content-centered approach to curriculum seems to be utilized by most of the art educators in the United States today (La Porte, Speirs, & Young, 2008).

Elliot Eisner

In addition to studying under Marilyn Stewart, while undergoing DBAE training Violet had the opportunity to meet Elliot Eisner, an internationally acclaimed researcher in art education, and one of the pioneers of the DBAE movement in the early eighties. Eisner, along with Greer, Day, and Dobbs, worked on the Kettering Project at Stanford University in 1967 in order to formulate the DBAE movement (Uhrmacher and Matthews, 2005). "He's a very knowledgeable person. He emphasized that DBAE helped to legitimize art as more of an academic subject. His ideas also fit right into the curriculum writing techniques that I was accustomed to."

DBAE in North Louisiana

After their initial three-week training period in Florida, Ron and Violet worked with teams of DBAE educators in the surrounding school districts, and conducted teacher-training workshops. They worked tirelessly to educate their peers on the virtues of DBAE. Florida became saturated with the Getty Center techniques. When the two arrived in north Louisiana, however, a different art education landscape presented itself.

Apparently, very few art educators in north Louisiana were aware of DBAE when Ron and Violet arrived in Monroe. Violet and Ron began writing grants in order to

conduct summer workshops which would introduce the teachers in the area to these new techniques. Beginning in 1991, the first Summer Arts Institutes were initiated at Northeast Louisiana University. These workshops were funded by a grant from the Very Special Arts (VSA) of Louisiana, which is a part of the Louisiana Division of the Arts. The focus of this funding agency was to reach children with exceptionalities through the utilization of specific art techniques. Their mission statement today states that their goal is to "expand the capabilities, confidence and quality of life for persons with disabilities through arts programming" (VSA Arts of Louisiana, 2003-2007). As a result, much of the focus of at least the initial Summer Arts Institutes was on children with disabilities. Violet and Ron managed to expand far beyond their original scope, however, and eventually included the entire gamut of the DBAE repertoire in their workshops. The Summer Arts Institutes have remained a fixture at Northeast Louisiana University, from 1991 to the present, and have continued to emphasize DBAE. They have been conducted since the late 1990s by this researcher, however, and some changes have been instituted. Some success has been achieved, for example, in integrating some Community-based Art Education content as well as some Visual Culture Art Education with the lesson plans. Because the workshops are only conducted over a three-week period, the exposure to any new techniques is limited. Both positive and negative responses from the participants to these methods have been noted. Further integration and research in this area is necessary in order to draw any concrete conclusions regarding the impact of either VCAE or CBAE in these workshops.

Because of this strong, early immersion in DBAE techniques, Violet's art classes were almost totally DBAE-based. Violet was consistently implementing improvements,

however. Changes to lesson plans, incorporating more and more creativity in her art projects, and further developing her relationships with parents, peers, community, and new students were ongoing. She worked in Ouachita Parish as the only art teacher for five extremely productive years, educating a large population of teachers and students in DBAE techniques.

At the end of her tenure in north Louisiana, Violet had gained the respect of her peers and administrators that she richly deserved. Upon her resignation, the personnel director of the school board wrote Violet a blanket letter of recommendation to any job that she undertook.

> He said anybody that hires Violet will be proud. So everyone knew that I was going to make something good of it [art]. It's not going to be a waste of time. Once administrators feel that you're being a benefit, they will give you more money. But, we have to prove ourselves. And a lot of art people don't know that, and that's sad, because English and science don't have to prove themselves, but as art teachers, we do.

All of Violet's hard work at the elementary, secondary, and university level, had served her well and helped to prepare her for her greatest challenge and her still current position at Rose High School near Jackson, Mississippi.

LATER TEACHING HISTORY

In order to accommodate her husband's career choices, Violet made many transitions over the years – from elementary, to junior high, to higher education positions. She moved from state to state in order to fulfill the demands of Ron's aspirations to complete and fulfill the Ph.D. Throughout the years, however, she managed to avoid any secondary level positions. "I told Ron to please not ever ask me to teach high school. I was afraid of high school." After the Ph.D. was completed, though, Ron was offered a desirable position as Department Head at Mississippi College. The college was very near their home town and both of their families. Ron and Violet could have relocated at this point to just about anywhere in the country with Ron's new credentials in hand. The compensation for teachers was certainly better in neighboring states, like Texas and Florida. Ron and Violet had other things to consider, however. Violet tearfully recalled, "We came back here [Mississippi] because we are from here and we believe in giving back. I didn't grow up here but my parents did and my roots are here. Ron grew up here. A lot of people want to get an education and leave Mississippi, but somebody's got to stay. We love the people here." It was, to put it succinctly, a perfect offer for them.

Rose High School

For Violet, though, the best offer available in the area at the time was the position as full-time art teacher at Rose High School – the dreaded high school teaching position. Her future as a high school teacher, eventually, proved to be her most successful pedagogical chapter to date. She fell in love with teenagers and with her job at Rose.

> I actually love it better than all the rest now. They (teenagers) might have a little rebellious attitude but most

> of them when you can get past that mask that they have on, are very impressionable. You can affect them in a positive way. So once you win them over you can be very effective, so that's rewarding to me. They can be little kids and they can be adults all in the same class period.

The transition to secondary education was an important educational experience for Violet, but it was certainly not without its challenges.

Rose High School Demographics

When Violet was initially hired as an art teacher at Rose High School in 1999, the school was much smaller, and the art program had become stagnant. One art teacher, Mr. Bench, had been at the school for the previous 15 years. In its entire history, the school had never had more than one art teacher. For her first ten years of employment at the school, Violet and Mr. Bench were the only two art teachers. As of the 2007-2008 school year, Rose High School now has three art teachers. Violet has been most excited about the growth of the art program and all of the changes that have occurred in the last ten years. Conditions at the school were not initially so positive.

Rose High School has a population of about 1000 students. It is considered a low socioeconomic school and is located in the city of Pearl, a suburb of Jackson, Mississippi. According to Violet, it is generally anticipated that only about 50% of graduates from Rose will go on to attend college. Violet estimated that 40% of her students are African American; 45% are white; and then a very small percentage are Asian and eastern Indian, and Hispanic. A large percentage of the population of the area seems to be transient as

well. Violet said that many of her students live in trailer parks and frequently move in and out of the area during the course of the school year. The high school serves the entire population of Rankin County. Demographics for Rankin County, Mississippi, show a population of about 115,000, with 81% being white, 17% African American, 1% Hispanic, and less than 1% native American or Asian. The median income is $44,000 annually, and 10% of the population lives below the national poverty level (Rankin County Mississippi, 2008).

Rose High School Recognition

Rose High School has received several important recognitions from both state and national authorities. It was given the designation of a National Blue Ribbon School in the 1990-1991, school year. The National Blue Ribbon School program is a part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. This designation is awarded to schools whose populations consist of at least 40% of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. When these schools dramatically improve student performance in accordance with state assessment systems, they are designated as a National Blue Ribbon School. In addition, a reward system is in place for schools that score in the top 10% on state assessments (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Rose is also designated as a Level 5 school in the Mississippi state school performance classification system. This system ranks schools according to their performance. A Level 5 school is the highest designation in the state, and is described as a "Superior Performing School" (Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2007). Twenty percent of the teachers in the Pearl School District are nationally board certified (Pearl Public Schools, 2007). Violet received her

National Board of Professional Teaching Certification in 2001. The school itself was noted for its superior performance according to national and state assessments, but the art department, prior to Violet's arrival, had received very little recognition.

Rose High School Art Department

Initially, Violet did not want to initiate any dramatic changes in the routine that had been established by the more veteran art teacher, Mr. Bench. While Violet had many of her own ideas about the direction for the art department at Rose, she was hesitant to openly question Mr. Bench's techniques. She realized that this was a system that had worked for more than 15 years, and Mr. Bench was reluctant to make any significant changes to his routine. As a result, changes were slow in the art department due in large part to Violet's deep respect for Mr. Bench.

Violet also came to a very quick realization that, in her opinion, high school teachers have a much more rigorous schedule than educators at any other grade level. She found it exhausting and taxing, both physically and emotionally. She also quickly discovered that organization was a key component to success. "I get physically tired." Violet is fortunate to have an intimate cohort with a great deal of experience in this area.

> My husband, who is chairman of the art department of a university, will agree, because he taught high school before he received his Ph.D. He's told me many times that all college teachers could not teach high school. It's a different mentality. You have to deal with discipline, classroom management, and administrators on a much

> more immediate level. It discourages a lot of teachers. Teenagers are tough. But, I like a challenge, so it doesn't make me back down because I know I'm doing good for them, and I know I can reach them. They might realize it by the time they graduate, and that's very rewarding.

In the meantime, however, high school teachers must remain vigilant, as Violet soon discovered.

Senior Art Teacher at Rose High School

When Mr. Bench retired from the school system, Violet became the senior teacher and a new teacher was hired at an entry level. Violet was finally given the green light to realize her vision for the art department at Rose High School. In addition to introducing strong studio techniques, she began to introduce her students to art history, aesthetics, and art criticism. She diligently worked to balance all four. "To me, that's the biggest change in the past 30 years. I was almost all production in the beginning. Now I balance all four areas to make them think. My maturity eventually came with an understanding of the way artists think." Within DBAE, her one weak area self-admittedly, has always been aesthetics.

"How do you teach people to have a belief? And what if that belief is different from your own?" These were big questions that Violet had to confront if she was going to remain true to the DBAE philosophy of art education. She was also responsible for young adults at this point in her career, and these questions were going to ultimately

arise. Allowing students to express feelings openly in the classroom, which were different from the accepted norm was a frightening prospect for Violet.

Unfortunately, in so many classrooms across the nation, young adults are never asked their opinions or beliefs. Many teachers, like Violet in the beginning, are fearful of losing control in the classroom if students are allowed to have a voice. Art classes are one of the few areas in the curriculum where individuality can safely, and without fear, be expressed. But how often are children really allowed to express themselves in school? Tony Wagner (2003) of the Change Leadership Group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education expressed his own frustration with school that many teenagers must feel: "Growing up, the world made no sense to me. In twelfth grade, I started reading aphorisms and wrote one that summed up my experience with school: 'Is life nothing more than a question and answer period, where the questions go unanswered, and the answers go unquestioned?'" An excerpt fromWagner's poem *Where the Mind is Without Fear* sums up his idea of what school should be about – essentially a safe place to think, without fear:

> Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high.
>
> Where knowledge is free;
>
> …Where words come out from the depth of truth;
>
> Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
>
> Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action… (R.Tagore, 1997)

Open Discussion in the Art Classroom

Over the years, Violet came to the realization that it was wonderfully acceptable for her students to have a different opinion from her own. She managed her group critique sessions by allowing the students the time and freedom of discussion, but by always bringing them back in the end to the generally accepted opinion of the academy. These "aesthetic sessions" were sometimes surprising, and Violet found them enlightening. Questions arose like, "If an elephant or even a cat splatters paint across a page, is this considered art?" or "Is graffiti that defaces a building art?" Elliot Eisner (2008, March 27) calls surprise one of the most important elements that the arts bring to the classroom, "Education can learn from the arts that surprise is not to be seen as an intruder in the process of inquiry but as part of the rewards one reaps when working artistically." The "aesthetic sessions" also became a very positive area in Violet's lessons because it forced the students to think, to form their own opinions, and to feel comfortable voicing those opinions. The important thing to Violet was that her students began to think, and to think like artists. Perhaps, in its utter simplicity, this was the most vital change that Violet made to the art program at Rose High School – the students began to really think.

TEACHING TODAY

The most satisfying aspect of Violet's job is the fact that she knows she will be instrumental in changing someone's life – and most likely many peoples' lives. She savors the idea that she can, perhaps, help a child find his or her best direction. This was a common sentiment among the art teachers studied in the Literature Review for this

research (Barone, 2001) (Grauer, Irwin, & Zimmerman,2003). "I enjoy helping kids to discover themselves and be true to themselves and what they really want to do with their lives, because it would be wonderful if everyone could love their job as much as I do." Violet's passion for art education is innate and complete. She has achieved a level of teaching from which she gains a great deal of personal and professional satisfaction. She calls herself, not an older teacher, but a "master teacher." This self-designation comes only after having taught in the public school system for 32 years and having paid many professional development dues. So, what does being a "master teacher" look like?

A Typical Day at Rose

Violet arrives at school between 7:30 and 7:40 am every morning. She has a twenty-five minute commute from her home, so she leaves her home at 7 am. The commute is a welcome "thinking" spot in the day. She uses this time to review in her mind what she needs to accomplish and the problems she might have to deal with from the previous day. Occasionally, she encounters traffic along the way, but in central Mississippi, this problem is generally minimal.

Violet signs in at the main office and then goes to her classroom. She makes certain that a "pre-bell" is written on the board to begin the day. A "pre-bell" is an activity that the students engage in as soon as they enter the classroom. Many of the students arrive early, and this activity gives them something to do. It keeps them quiet, and they immediately become engaged in the scheduled art project for the day. "I usually make this activity relate to whatever we're teaching that day. It's either a drawing assignment, answering a question, copying some notes, or it could be analyzing

something that we did the previous day. But, it's always something to make them think." During the first five minutes of the pre-bell activity, Violet takes roll, and then class officially begins.

Violet's art room is enormous. It is a former choir room with excellent lighting. Only two students occupy each table, giving each student an abundance of table-top space on which to work. The students feel comfortable in the space. Three art studio rooms, multiple storage rooms, and individual office space is available for the three art teachers.

Motivational Lectures

During the first ten to fifteen minutes of class, Violet usually gives a motivational lecture, a demonstration, or sometimes a PowerPoint presentation. Violet is very proud of the fact that during the previous summer, she learned PowerPoint with the assistance of her husband, and she was able to assemble many relevant presentations for her students this school year. Since many of these students will never be able to visit major international museums, she feels she is bringing the museums to them through the PowerPoint presentations. This initial fifteen minutes of class is considered the primary lecture for the art lesson. It is also the time during which she introduces art history, and Violet believes it is important to make this portion of the lesson as exciting as possible for the students.

> I do not want to be a boring art history teacher. I know some art teachers who say that the art history lessons bore the students to death. I've observed some of these

> classrooms, and they are boring. By contrast, I have interactive art history. I might lecture a little bit, but I'm also constantly asking them questions. They're solving problems during the course of the lecture. They're looking at slides and then giving me feedback.

In addition, Violet brings excitement to her lectures through the use of theatrics.

> Thursday of this week, I mummified one of the boys in my class. I had the whole corner of my room set up for this process. We had the lights down low, and I did a pantomime. I do a lot of drama. I think I'm a thespian want-to-be. I like acting things out. I dressed as a priest, and I chanted as I did the mummification. When we talk about prehistoric art, I go around the room grunting. And I do little skits. And I guess the kids remember it more. They'll say, do you remember the day when you were the caveman – I loved that. I do crazy things because if you do those crazy things, they remember, and then they begin to learn. I do not have to entertain them for an hour and a half, but every other week or so, I will do some crazy stuff. I also have a lot of special needs students in my classes, so I try to appeal to every different kind of learner.

Typical Classroom Activities

After Violet completes her lecture/skit, the students are given a handout sheet and some reflective notes to copy from the board. She limits the amount of note-taking by the students to only about ten minutes every other day. Then, at the end of four or five weeks, the students are tested. Test scores account for only 20% of their grade, while the remaining 80% of the student's grade is assigned to art production and participation. At the end of the note-taking period, the students begin their art production work, and they are left with about ten minutes to clean up.

Violet teaches three classes a day, with a twenty-five minute lunch break, and one full hour and one half planning period, every other day. She has hall duty every other day as well. School is over at 4:00 pm, but she normally doesn't leave campus until 5:00 or 5:30. On a normal day, Violet continues her work at home in the evenings. She calls hers an ideal schedule.

A/B Scheduling

The primary reason Violet calls this an ideal schedule is because it is based on what her school system calls the A/B Schedule. She sees A classes on Monday and Wednesday, and B classes on Tuesday and Thursday, and then A classes again on Friday. The schedule continually rotates throughout the year. Violet calls it a type of block scheduling technique.

> I have the students for an hour and a half – not just fifty minutes. So we don't have seven or eight 50 minute periods a day. I would hate that as an art teacher. I can accomplish so much more in an hour and a half. There is

> time for the motivational period, a PowerPoint presentation, art criticism, and art history. Then we get out supplies, and there is a whole hour left to complete art production or studio work.

Violet recalls that the school system at Rose has instituted block scheduling for the past ten or twelve years. It functions easily because every class in the school is one hour and a half. For example, every child has four classes a day and might go to math, science, English, and art on Monday. On the next day, Tuesday, that same child will attend four different classes, then return to math, science, English and art on Wednesday. In essence, the students are receiving eight classes over a two-day period, in rotating sequence.

Violet believes that the scheduling has enlivened many of the classes that would normally become boring to many students. The teachers of traditional lecture courses such as history, science, and math did not acclimate as quickly to the block scheduling, as did the arts. Many of those teachers have now incorporated hands-on activities, group activities, and class projects into their lectures. As a result, the children remain more attentive and, therefore, more engaged in learning. According to Violet, the block scheduling has been a very positive direction for Rose High School.

Most of Violet's classes consist of between twenty and twenty-five students. Violet considers this a large class, especially for studio classes. When the students advance to upper-level painting or ceramics, the class size drops to about thirteen. This is a much more manageable number of students, as the projects become more complex during the junior and senior years.

Art Fees

All of the students at Rose who involve themselves in visual art classes, pay an art fee of $10.00. This fee has not changed for twenty-one years, and it covers all of the art supplies needed for the class. Violet admits that the art fee should probably increase at this point. Most of the students pay their art fee, but some are unable to do so. The school cannot force the students to pay an art fee, so the $10.00 per student is not ever guaranteed to the program. The Art II students pay an additional $8.00 fee which is used to purchase each of them a hard-bound sketch book. Sketching exercises go along with "thinking" time, and are an important part of Violet's curriculum. The sketch books are, therefore, mandatory.

Scheduling Art Classes

The art classes are divided among three visual arts teachers in an equitable manner. Violet teaches Visual Art Studios, Art II, and Ceramics I and II. The new art teacher, who is twenty years younger than Violet, teaches all Visual Art Studios and Art I. The other art teacher, who is ten years younger than Violet, teaches all Art I classes and one painting course. Violet perceives this staggering of ages as an advantage for her department because, as long as they all three remain at their positions, at least one of the three of them will continue the legacy that they will all create, for the next 30 years. Art I and Art II, are sequential courses. Art II consists of much more difficult studio work, which builds on what was learned in Art I. Students must pass Art I with at least an 85 average, in order to move on to Art II. Other studio courses offered at Rose include

Visual Arts Studio, Ceramics I and II, and Painting I and II. Violet is hopeful that next year Digital Photography will be offered, as well.

Visual and Performing Arts Teachers

Of the eighty teachers at Rose High School, eleven are in the arts specialties. The art teachers are in demand because 65% of the students at Rose enroll in some form of either visual or performing arts classes. Rose has three visual arts teachers, three music teacher, three band teachers, and two drama teachers. One of the drama teachers has become, most recently, the arts coordinator for the school district. This has created a direct line of support for the arts to the school board. Violet views this as an auspicious opportunity. "This is the first year we've had an arts coordinator in the central office, and we're so excited."

The Arts Coordinator

The new arts coordinator, along with Violet's help, is attempting to achieve vertical alignment with the middle schools and the elementary schools in the area. Violet and her cohorts feel that their art programs could accelerate so much further if the students were better prepared in both elementary and middle school. The team feels that if the students could learn more basic skills at the middle school level, such as contour drawing and value shading, by the time the students reached high school, so much more would be achievable. Other areas of the arts in the district have already achieved vertical alignment – for example, music and drama, primarily, Violet feels, because the arts coordinator is a music teacher. The visual arts, at this time, are lacking, however.

Currently, meetings are being conducted weekly on this project. Only one of the elementary feeder schools does not have an art teacher at this time. This is one important area, however, that is being addressed immediately by the committee.

Awards and Honors

One significant reason Violet is so well-respected among her peers and the administration, is because she has proven herself over the past ten years at Rose High School through the numerous awards that both she and her program have received. The self-designation of "master teacher" was actually initiated by Violet herself, in order to avoid being called the "older" teacher or the "veteran" teacher. She prefers the sound of "master teacher." The designation seems to fit, however, in more ways than are obviously apparent. She has received a great deal of recognition over the course of her career.

The awards for Violet continue to accumulate. She began receiving commendations while still a student in high school, and this continued through the junior college, and then university-level. Once she began teaching, she received the National Art Education Association Certificate of Commendation in 1978; the Mississippi Art Education Association Bill Poirier Outstanding Art Educator of the Year Award in 1982; the NAEA Mississippi Outstanding Art Educator of the Year Award in 1983; and the NAEA Southeastern Region Outstanding Elementary Art Educator of the Year Award in 1985. After having moved to the high school level, Violet received the award for Rose High School Teacher of the Year in 2001; Rose School District Teacher of the Year in 2002; the MAEA Bill Poirier Outstanding Art Educator of the Year Award in 2002; and

the NAEA Mississippi Outstanding Art Educator of the Year Award in 2003. In 2005, Violet received the Governor's Award of Excellence for Arts Education; the Distinguished Art Alumna of the Year Award from Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi; and the NAEA Southeastern Region Outstanding Secondary Art Educator of the Year Award. In 2008, Violet received the NAEA Presidential Citation at the national convention in New Orleans. Most recently in 2008, Violet received the prestigious Thad Cochran Award for Outstanding Secondary Arts Teacher in Mississippi.

Professional Development Associations

Violet also has numerous associations with professional organizations that serve to enhance her career and to further professional development activities. In each state which she has taught, her association with the state art association has always been strong. These include Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi. In addition, she is a past member of the Vicksburg Art Association, the Mississippi Museum of Art, the Rankin County Art Alliance, the Northeast Louisiana Arts Council, and the Florida Institute for Art Education. Violet is currently a member of the National Art Education Association, the Mississippi Art Education Association, the Mississippi Alliance for Arts in Education, and Alpha Delta Kappa, Omicron Chapter of Mississippi.

She has taken numerous leadership positions within these organizations. She is currently the MAEA Committee Advisor for NAEA Southeastern Leadership Conference 2008 on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi; the MAEA historian; Past-President of MAEA, Adjudication Trainer and Adjudicator of the Visual Art Student Selection, Mississippi School of the Arts, Brookhaven, Mississippi; Sponsor for the NAEA National Art Honor

Society and the National Junior Art Honor Society, Rose High School; and she sits on the Art Education Advisory Committee at the Mississippi College Department of Art in Clinton, Mississippi.

Prior to 2008, Violet has served on numerous committees, taken multiple leadership positions, and participated in both regional and national professional development activities and presentations. Most recently in 2007, she presented her *International Tea Party* at both the MAEA statewide fall conference, and the NAEA National Convention held in New York City. The *International Tea Party* is a ceramics unit of study for advanced high school art students. The students are asked to select an international culture, study the culture, study the artifacts of that culture, create a pottery tea set based on motifs from that culture, conduct an actual tea party based on that culture, and then present the entire project to the school.

The lesson begins with a complete study. After the students select their culture, they are asked to answer some questions about that culture and then complete some sketches in their sketchbook. The students then review drawings, paintings, sculptures, architecture, fashion, and the crafts of that culture. The students are asked to subsequently create an original design based on motifs inspired by each of the art forms they've discovered. Each art form has to be represented in one original design. This design is then represented in the form of a complete tea set. During their presentation to the class, the tea set which they have created must be fully functional as well. Once again, Violet's students are forced into artistic thinking. "It touches them personally because they have to take the characteristics of the culture and implement it in their own way. So their work is influenced by a style, but they create their own personal style."

This is a classic DBAE lesson plan. This is not unusual for Violet. Since her earliest days of teaching, she has been assembling similar, exuberant units of study for her students. The list is seemingly endless. The *International Tea Party* presentation was an enormous success in both Mississippi and at the national convention in New York.

Inservice Workshops at Rose

In addition to developing workshops for national and regional presentations, Violet has conducted workshops for the other teachers at Rose. "I want the entire school to understand how important art is." Violet strictly volunteered her time for one notable project. She wrote an art lesson plan that integrated art into each teacher's specific content area. In addition, she wrote a mini grant and, with the funds procured, purchased art reproductions for each teacher to utilize in their classroom in order to incorporate art with their given subject. She paid close attention to the state guidelines for each subject, whether it was math, English or science. Many of the teachers at Violet's school have implied that their subjects are more important than art. Violet vehemently disagrees and wanted to demonstrate to each of these teachers that art provides content to students that no other subject can offer. In Violet's quiet and assertive way, she was able to demonstrate to both the teachers and the administration at her school how valuable the arts can be, while at the same time providing an important service to the school.

Violet does admit that the volunteer workshops for her colleagues serve another important purpose. After 30 or more years of teaching, the art teachers continue to "get dumped on" quite often. The other teachers still ask Violet to make posters for them or to help with bulletin board designs. While Violet could easily take on every task, she feels

many times that the other teachers could just as easily handle the responsibility, and many of them actually have more time than she does. The workshops help her fellow teachers to understand that art is a "real" subject, and that serious concepts are learned in art. In addition, the other teachers learn important techniques, and the needed confidence to produce their own, needed art projects.

National Art Honor Society

Another way that Violet has broadened the art program at Rose High School is through the re-introduction of the National Art Honor Society (NAHS). The NAHS is an organization instigated by the NAEA in 1978, specifically for high school students in grades 10-12. The NAEA also began a program in 1989 for students in grades 7-9, called the National Junior Art Honor Society (NJAHS). Both organizations target their purpose as being to inspire and recognize students who have shown an outstanding ability in the arts. In addition, membership in these organizations helps students to work toward a higher potential in a variety of art areas, and they also bring art education much needed attention in the community. Members of NAHS and NJAHS are eligible for various scholarships, grants, school awards, and national recognition (National Art Honor Society, 2007).

Violet is committed to the NAHS program. Mr. Bench initiated the NAHS at Rose during the 1990s. Eventually, the NAHS dissolved into an art club. It was a fun organization, but it lacked direction. The art faculty realized that the art club never carried the respect or clout of the NAHS; Violet, along with Mr. Bench, re-established the NAHS charter soon after Violet was employed at Rose. The art faculty wanted their

students to have membership in a significant organization that offered substantial benefits to their school.

With the NAHS, the students become members of a national organization; they must meet some fairly rigorous standards in order to qualify for that membership. The NAHS requires at least a 94 average in art courses. The NAHS also requires that a student have recognizably good character. Letters of recommendation are required. In addition, the student must be interested in making a significant contribution to their school or their community. Violet is, of course, the faculty sponsor. The NAHS meets once per month, they conduct fundraisers, and they go on interesting field trips. The fundraisers typically involve something akin to designing t-shirts, or having a cappuccino sale. These fundraisers and field trips have proven themselves to be very lucrative for the school.

Because of the NAHS fundraisers, Rose High School houses a noteworthy permanent collection of original art, now valued at over $50,000. This significant art collection was instigated during the tenure of Mr. Bench, but continues today under Violet's watch. The students' field trips consist of visits to regional art galleries and museums. In the past, they have made trips to Mobile, Memphis, New Orleans, and Ocean Springs, Mississippi. The students visit galleries during their excursions and decide, as a group, which piece they would like to purchase for the school's collection. One work of art is generally purchased annually. Last year, the NAHS spent $1400 on a work by a local artist who was a part of the Katrina Collection which is traveling throughout the country and which depicts the devastation along the Gulf Coast and in New Orleans that occurred in 2005.

Violet believes her students learn valuable life lessons through the process of giving. The Rose High School NAHS adopted another school on the coast that lost everything during the hurricanes and was able, through fundraising, to send that school over $1000.00 for art supplies for their students. "Our students are not wealthy, but they can do fundraisers. So we do that to help us go on a trip, or buy art, or help somebody else that needs assistance in the arts."

Violet's Personal Art

In addition, to all of her teaching accolades, Violet has continued to produce her own art work. While she does not consider this her primary vocation now, she still feels it is important that she remain true to her original calling – to be an artist. Violet's media of choice have varied over the years. She has excelled in batik, printmaking, pastels, and relief. She has continued to pursue workshops in a variety of media. Workshops stimulate her excitement about making art, and Violet believes she subsequently relays this enthusiasm to her students in the classroom. She has been asked to exhibit her work throughout the region including shows in Vicksburg, Jackson, Clinton, Raymond, McComb, and Greenville, Mississippi. Two of Violet's and Ron's batiks were purchased in 2007 by the Mississippi Natural Science Museum in Jackson, Mississippi, for its permanent collection. The very large, 12 foot batiks are biographical, and depict the couple's lives together in Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

> They bought the Mississippi and Louisiana batiks because of the symbolism they contain that represent each state. The Louisiana one had a swamp and alligators. They

> wanted them because of the animals. We did them because of the hidden symbolism depicting the journey of our lives together as artists.

Being a teacher has definitely affected Violet's own art work. Being true to her DBAE roots, Violet attributes most of the influence of teaching on her art work to DBAE. When she began constructing art criticisms and art history lessons during the 1980s, she was able to look at other artist's work and gain a deeper understanding of the artist's intent. She believes this study of other artists has helped her to understand her own voice as an artist. "Now I've gone more from just producing something off the top of my head, to planning compositions, planning symbolism, and to understanding what I'm trying to say with my art. And, I want to say something important with my work when I do it."

Strategic Planning

Because of Violet's enthusiasm for her job, all of her awards, her leadership skills, and the accolades her students have received, her administration has come to support her program almost without question. Even though Violet is at the age of a comfortable retirement, she enjoys such strong support from her administration, she is not giving consideration to retirement at this point. "They've made it so easy for me now, with such strong support from the administration, and the accommodating scheduling. This is getting exciting now. I can do something now. They have given me so much freedom and such a great budget, I feel I can really bring the program up in quality at this point."

Last year, one of her colleagues and Violet decided to present a strategic plan to the administration, exclusively for the visual arts. "They had started all of these strategic plans for the entire school system, and we decided we were going to make a strategic plan specifically for art." Violet and her cohorts wanted to eliminate Art III and Art IV from the curriculum altogether. Ideally, they would like the students who complete Art II, to advance into specialty areas of art. Right now, they want those specialties to be either ceramics or painting. Next year, they want to add specialty courses in photography and printmaking. Violet believes that more concentrated work in these areas of specialization will better prepare the students for further work at the collegiate level. She believes it will assist the student in understanding what it is like to be a "real" artist. The administration was impressed with the art teacher's strategic plan and has agreed to make the requested changes to the curriculum. The school has also backed up their support with the promise to purchase seven new potter's wheels. The new wheels, which will cost the school several thousand dollars, were proposed by Violet last year, and the administration agreed.

> I was really shocked. I didn't think he'd do it. But, because of my background, he knows that I'm going to make a success of it. I'm not going to waste the money or embarrass the school. I think a lot of art teachers out there have good intentions, but they don't take the time to win over the administrators. As I said before, you always want to keep the administrators and custodians on your side.

As a follow-up to this interview, four new pottery wheels arrived at the school in December, 2008. Violet was only slightly disappointed in the number. She expects to begin her wheel-throwing classes in the fall of 2009.

In addition to winning over the administration, Violet's students have received positive feedback for her efforts. Last year, after having taken over the advanced classes, one of her students received a $2,000 scholarship for her portfolio. "She wasn't even my strongest student, and I thought this is exciting." Violet's enthusiasm is obviously transmitted to her students.

Special students

Over the years, many outstanding students have graced Violet's art classrooms. From the time that she taught in Ouachita Parish, Louisiana, and saw 4,372 children every year, to the current semester at Rose High School, certain students have impressed Violet with both positive and negative memories. She learned a great deal from a few sterling examples.

Kyle

While teaching in Louisiana, Violet had the opportunity to work with a blind student for the very first time in her career. Kyle was in the 5th grade, and had lost his sight at age 7, so he had some memory of vision. He had been mainstreamed into the regular classroom; his love of art was apparent from the beginning. Kyle called Violet "Mrs. Art." Violet was doing a segment on sea life, so she gave the students clay. Certain studies have shown that students with vision impairment normally respond to the

tactile medium of clay. "Through their sensitive use of their hands, those who could see nothing taught us about a kind of 'free-floating tactile attention' in their approach to shape, form, and texture…. They seemed to know where to position their wood-scraps, suggesting a 'tactile aesthetic' different from a visual one" (Hurwitz & Day, 2001, p. 83). Violet was also aware of Lowenfeld's (p. 83) studies with blind children. She was certain that Kyle would enjoy clay.

Kyle responded so well to the clay project that he created a memory for Violet that she'll never forget. For the sea life lesson, Kyle modeled a perfect dolphin.

> When Kyle was given clay and he would sculpt something, he was better than any of the other sighted kids in the class. And the other children would say that it wasn't fair. And Kyle would just smile. He couldn't see, but he was better at sculpting than anyone else.

Kyle was also given a mask project. Violet remembers him touching his own face as he was modeling the mask. Like the dolphin before, Kyle's mask was ultimately the best project in the class.

Kyle taught Violet a great deal about working with students with disabilities. She was asked after that to present art classes to the all-blind class at the school. These were primarily students who had been blind from birth.

> I learned at that point that students who had some reference could imitate life, but those with no reference, produced much more abstract work. Their work was more about

> feeling and movement. Their work was more like a very introverted, personal art.

When Violet left the school, Kyle made her a sculpture which she still keeps on her desk today. He was an exceptionally special student. "He called me Mrs. Art because he couldn't remember my real name. And art was his favorite thing. He would excel in that. He's one kid that stood out."

A Student Not Interested in Art

Several years ago, Violet had another art student at Rose High School who was memorable because this particular student had no initial intention of studying art. Instead, she was determined to become an accountant. The student began in Violet's Visual Arts Studio during her first year at Rose. She excelled in the class, and continued on for three more years in visual arts. When she graduated from high school, she changed her major from accounting to art. "…she said it was because of me. She just graduated from Mississippi College with a bachelor's degree in art last year, and I went to her graduation." This student became a professional artist. Violet apparently has had a similar effect on many of her students.

An Unlovable Student

The student who won the $2,000 scholarship recently was not one who Violet would have initially counted as outstanding. As a matter of fact, just about everyone in the school considered this particular student "unlovable and irritating." She was loud and obnoxious, and the other students disliked her. She was very rebellious in 9th and 10th

grade, but her attitude changed over time, and Violet was the guiding influence. She loved art, so she did everything that Violet asked her to do. After she won the scholarship last year, she began to focus on art even more. As a result, she is not creating difficulties any longer. Violet strongly contends that this student will find success in life because of her interest in art.

Megan

One other student who has remained prominent in Violet's mind was Megan, a girl who was not going to graduate. Her senior grades indicated that Megan would not meet all of the criteria necessary to graduate, but Violet persevered by constantly checking on her and calling her. Violet recalls conferring with the English teacher about Megan. The English teacher confided to Violet that Megan was struggling and, most likely, not going to pass. In at least one instance, Violet allowed Megan to utilize the time in her art class to finish her English test. Megan excelled in art, but was not consistent with her attendance or study habits. She told Violet she had a strong desire to attend the Memphis College of Art. That year, Violet encouraged the National Art Honor Society to make their annual field trip to Memphis. Megan was thrilled about taking a field trip there. Violet never told the other students why she had chosen Memphis. Megan eventually did graduate; Violet is convinced that her art class made the difference.

Future Research

This study, of course, does not recount all of Violet's outstanding students. It has, due to editing constraints, eliminated many interesting classroom events, as well. At this

point in the interview process, however, Violet began to mention the idea of further research on former students. With more time devoted to select students, some of her students would make a fascinating treatise on the teaching profession in a low-socioeconomic area of the South. Tom Barone's book, *Touching Eternity*: *The Enduring Outcomes of Teaching* (2001), which was reviewed in Chapter 2 of this study, was mentioned as a model study. Violet had not read the book, but she was receptive to the idea of a further study of former students. Barone (2001), of course, followed many of one "master teacher's" students into adulthood in order to document long-term effects of that teacher's influence on his students. A further study of Violet's former students is also warranted.

The Master Teacher Today

This study has confirmed that Violet is the epitome of "master teacher." Indeed, Violet does give herself this moniker for several reasons.

> I call myself a master teacher because I'm somebody who has been successful, somebody who has changed and grown, and I'm somebody who is still giving back, and not just being stagnant. In the beginning, it's all about survival. If you ever get to the point where you're a veteran teacher and you're just surviving, you need to quit because you haven't achieved to the point where you're really helping the students. I have to get past the point that it's all about me. It's really all about them.

Not only has Violet grown significantly as a teacher over the past 32 years, but other perceived, noteworthy changes in her classroom have occurred as well.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

The primary focus of this dissertation is change. In order to understand any changes that have taken place in Violet's classroom over the course of her career, it was important to document where she began as a teacher. The preceding biographical sketch, hopefully, elucidates Violet's teaching history. Violet, however, has lived through some very important changes in her classroom, the school system, and art education in general. Many valuable lessons can be absorbed from the study of Violet's experiences.

DBAE

Violet perceives the most important change in her own classroom over the past 32 years as the inception of DBAE. The introduction of DBAE concepts into her way of thinking about lesson plans and her delivery in the classroom changed everything for Violet in the early 1980s. Technology, seen by many teachers as the most significant change in classrooms in the 20th century (including John), is simply viewed by Violet as another tool or, in a somewhat superficial way, another art medium, used to further implement her DBAE techniques. Even though Violet began infusing some art history and art criticism in her curriculum in the early stages of her career, she concedes that art production almost always dominated the art lessons. Now, she strives for a real balance of all four areas of DBAE, and she's been very successful at doing so. She returns repeatedly to the idea that she wants her students to really "think," and she believes that

DBAE, above any other strategy, directs her classes toward that thoughtful mode of working.

Violet now presents an art criticism, art history, and art production segment every day to her students. She readily admits that aesthetics has always been a weaker area for her. She doesn't interject aesthetics every day, but normally every other day. Again, she is striving for a balance of all four disciplines. She frequently encounters colleagues who say they cannot hold their student's attention. Some of these teachers talk about the need to entertain their students in order to teach them anything. Violet believes that students can be trained to meet the teacher's expectations. Violet's student know to expect art history, art criticism, and aesthetics in her art classes, along with an art production activity.

> My students are trained to know that I expect them to look at a lot of art, and they have to give me their opinion. If they don't like a work of art, they must tell me why they don't like it. They must be able to specify their opinion about a work of art, voice that opinion, and discuss it with the other students and with me.

Again, the utilization of DBAE concepts in Violet's classroom has evolved over time. Her lessons have changed and become more complex. A national survey (La Porte, Speirs, & Young, 2008) confirmed that most art educators throughout the country prefer DBAE; many have indeed embellished their DBAE lessons over time to include a more postmodern approach. Violet contends that all of the lessons she has implemented using DBAE have created a positive impact in her classroom.

Postmodern Art Education

Several new curriculum content strategies have emerged in art education since the turn of the 21st century, including Visual Culture Art Education, Community-based Art Education, and Project-based Instruction, among others. Violet does not, in theory, utilize any of these methods in her classroom. Although, when describing some of her lesson plans, these new methods are represented in subtle ways. For instance, the students do work on student-generated group projects, and they do involve themselves in community-related events. In addition, one of the most outstanding aspects of VCAE is that students are asked to begin thinking in the same way that professional artists do, something that Violet has repeatedly stressed in her curriculum, particularly at the senior level. VCAE also emphasizes the importance of aesthetics. Kerry Freedman (2003), a published authority, calls VCAE, "a process of identity formation because we change as we learn, our learning changes our subjective selves." All of these aspects of VCAE are, of course, hallmarks of Violet's philosophy. VCAE and the other new trends in art education, do present a few difficulties for Violet, however.

In part, Violet cites a time-constraint issue with adding anything new to the curriculum. Violet feels a great deal of pressure for her students to enter and be represented in state-level art and scholastic competitions. This requires an enormous investment of time in the studio.

> I'm trying to get them out there to get their portfolios done, get their art work done so we can win competitions. It's a lot like other teachers 'teaching to the test.' I don't really

> do that, but I do want them to have a high-quality product when they do enter competitions. Craftsmanship, composition, design, and thought are so important. Some of these Visual Culture Art Education lessons seem a little watered down to me. The end product does not seem like quality. I'm such a goal-oriented person myself. I just want to see a quality end-product at the culmination of much thought, design, practice and expression.

The other two participants in this study also pointed out that lack of time was one of the primary roadblocks to addressing new concepts to their students. Time constraints seem to be a common underlying problem in many classrooms today.

Another objection that Violet has to introducing any new postmodern techniques to her students is that she is convinced that at the high school level, it is of prime importance that her students receive a strong foundation in the arts. She believes that high school is the optimum time for students to learn basic drawing skills, seeing skills, and thinking skills. Violet contends that after students leave high school and move on to college-level work, then they can explore new ways of exhibiting their voice. "That's an aesthetic question, I think, because it's almost the difference between abstraction and realism. Does an abstract artist have to be able to know how to draw realistically to be a successful abstract artist?" It is certainly something to think about. In addition, Violet's school and her department adhere fairly strictly to the national and state standards for the arts. These standards do not allow latitude for experimentation. Both Mary and Violet

believe that the content standards are important, but they express concern over the amount of time they are given with which to adhere to said guidelines.

Students

Violet's students have changed significantly over the past 32 years, as well. She attributes these changes to several factors, but changes in the family unit seem to top the list. She notices many more dysfunctional families, more single-parent households, and a generally more unsettled home life today than was present when she first began teaching. All of these things, of course, affect student learning. "Thirty years ago I was just a teacher-figure – now I'm more of a parent-figure as well. I have to share in the raising of these children. It's a definite trend."

Violet's perceptions indicate that home environment is not an absolute indicator of artistic ability, however. Some of the students who receive much more attention at home, and who come from a nurturing environment, naturally, arrive at school with a certain amount of exposure to the arts. This appears to be a definite advantage for those students. Conversely, Violet sees students everyday who come from broken homes, who receive little or no nurturing, and who still have talent and an internal desire to know more about art.

> It's been my experience that it's partially internal and partially environmental. I can sometimes take someone further who has a great deal of desire and relatively low creative ability than someone with a high creative ability and low desire. I really think there has to be a balance

> between an intuitive internal talent, their desire, and their environment.

Dysfunctional families have always existed, but Violet has noted that now a greater number of her students have some problem at home. She added that many more students today are dealing with much more severe family problems, as well.

"Society is moving at a much faster pace today than it was 30 years ago. Children are exposed to rapidly changing technological advances. They have to keep up in order to succeed." Violet also comments that, because of technology, learning has become so isolated and impersonal today. "They sit in front of a computer all day – this creates a type of social disconnect." All of this speed and technology has created a change in the attention-span of Violet's students.

So many students at Violet's school almost demand to be entertained, in order to learn. Classrooms thirty years ago were different, but so were students.

> I'm successful because I know how to mix up methods of teaching and keep their attention most of the time. I feel sorry for teachers who still use the old-fashioned, straight-lecture method. The kids are tuning them out. We're lucky because we teach art. I know some master teachers in my school who can keep their attention, because they teach to different learning styles, though.

This statement leads to the question of the ways in which teachers in general, and Violet's colleagues specifically, have changed.

Peers

Violet has noticed that many more of her colleagues are becoming discouraged with their profession. They seem to tire more quickly. More demands are placed on teachers today -- both physically and emotionally. Many of them give up and leave the profession altogether (Karge, 1993). This trend was also noted in Zimmerman's (1994) study, mentioned in Chapter 2, which revealed that many beginning educators are ill-prepared to meet many of the demands of the 21st century classroom. Violet has noticed this emerging trend in many schools today. When attending meetings and conventions, the talk among the veteran teachers very often reverts to the fact that many younger teachers are resigning after only two or three years of teaching. These teachers are either leaving the profession entirely or they're moving on to neighboring states that provide higher pay and greater benefits. Violet has experienced these pay differences first-hand. "Definitely the teacher pay in Florida and Texas is better than in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas."

Violet's school system has taken notice of the high number of young teacher resignations in their district and has taken steps to slow this disturbing trend. Rose School District is working diligently toward providing concerted mentoring to young teachers by more mature or veteran teachers. The veteran teachers shadow the younger teachers closely for the first year. They meet with one another every week until the Christmas holidays. After Christmas, the new teacher and his or her mentor meet once a month. The mentors at Violet's school follow their new-teacher cohorts for two years. The goal is to identify areas of concern for the new teachers and find solutions for any problems they may be encountering.

The new teachers, Violet has found, have problems in almost every area of teaching. Not only are there discipline problems in the classroom, but new teachers have problems with the demands of the public, the demands of the administration, and all of the paperwork that is involved with teaching. It can all be overwhelming to a new, young teacher. Violet talks about the impact that a calming force can have on a young teacher. "To have a veteran teacher come into their classroom and just say, 'relax and just calm down' means a great deal to some of these new teachers." Not everything has changed for first-year teachers, though. Violet recalls, "The first year is like the baptism of fire. I remember after that first year, all I kept thinking was please just let me have another chance at this. I know I can do better next year."

Many new teachers and older teachers, for that matter, become complacent and/or overwhelmed. Violet has seen this happen many times at her school. "These are the worst cases of all. These teachers are worse than the ones who actually quit after a year or two because they just hang in there, collect a paycheck, and they're not helping their students." Violet cites salary issues as a large part of the problem.

> It's a very hard job. To me it's the most noble of professions. Because who teaches the doctors, lawyers, and scientists – the teachers. It takes a very special person to educate themselves, tolerate all of the demands of being a teacher, and then remain content with the salary constraints of the profession today. And, especially if you're a single teacher this is really hard. Many of them have to have an extra summer job in order to make it.

Violet becomes quite passionate about the plight of teachers. She emphasizes the fact that good teachers must be retained. "In my school, 30% of the teachers are veteran teachers who will be retiring within the next five years. What's going to happen to my school in five years? Teachers are the most educated people in the country, with the lowest paying salaries." Violet hopes with the intense mentoring program that her school has initiated, many of the younger teachers will make the decision to stay at Rose. This research has shown that mentoring programs of this type can be quite effective (Karge, 1993).

Violet mentioned the fact that many teachers become complacent, but she emphasized that many of the teachers at her school are making positive changes, as well. It is very clear that the three visual art teachers at Rose High School work very well together toward positive changes and improvements in their classrooms. The implementation of the strategic plan is just one example of this evidence. Also, the addition of the arts coordinator for the school district has been useful in establishing vertical alignment between all schools in the district. Karen Keifer-Boyd (2000) emphasized how important it is to have the services of a good arts specialist in order to coordinate an effective arts curriculum in a school district.

Many researchers believe that, in general, teachers resist change, but Virginia Richardson (September, 1998) had a different point of view. Richardson concluded that teachers make positive changes in their classrooms whenever those changes are self-initiated, but teachers do resist changes that are imposed on them from above. While Violet has dealt with a degree of administrative edicts, her supervisors have seen the success of her program and supported changes that Violet and her colleagues sought to

implement themselves. This self-policing style seems to confirm Richardson's (1998) research.

Administration

Administrators have changed over the past 30 years, as well. Violet is quick to point out, however, that she believes that most of these perceived changes have occurred as a result of her moving from district to district. Her first administrator at the elementary school showed very little interest in the arts. As a result, Violet received very little administrative support, virtually no budget, and no encouragement whatsoever. She felt, at the time, that her art classes were considered nothing more than a recess break for the other teachers. While she has what she describes as an ideal relationship with administration now, she does recall that ten years ago, when she first started teaching at Rose, the administrative support was less than it is today. This administrative relationship has improved, to a large degree, because she believes she has proven herself over the past 10 years. All relationships require nurturing. "You bring positive recognition to the school, and then you get more support."

Violet does understand why some administrators might be apprehensive about the arts before a particular program has proven itself. She has encountered many art teachers who seem to have no purpose with their courses. Teachers need to have a direction, an agenda, or, as Violet and her cohorts asserted -- a strategic plan. She believes teachers have to learn to speak the language of administration, at times, in order to promote their own agendas. "Sometimes you have to teach them, just like you have to teach the public. We're in a field where we have to educate the public as to what we teach. They usually

don't really understand the arts." This statement essentially echoes the sentiments found in the preceding biography of Mary. Mary's first year of teaching at the junior high level, was essentially an educative process for the administrators at her school. The idea that administrators need to be educated was also echoed in J. Ulbricht's *2009* article titled, *Changing Art Education's Master Narrative through Media Narratives*, and reviewed in Chapter 2. Violet contends that good lesson planning, and good curriculum planning is at the core of administrative support as well.

Lesson Planning

Lesson planning has not changed drastically for Violet over thirty years. Although the submission of lesson plans has changed from hand-written delivery to digital delivery, the lesson plan itself has remained relatively basic. At the onset of Violet's career, she recalls filling out a page in a lesson planning book and making it available to the principal to check. Today, the art teachers email lesson plans once a week to their departmental chair. The chair checks each lesson plan and then emails them on to the principal. So lesson plans are submitted in a much more expeditious way. In the past, Violet has worked with administrators who don't really understand art lesson plans, sequencing of lessons, and/or evaluation and assessment in the arts. This is one of the reasons she feels so validated by the presence of an arts coordinator in her district who can make proper evaluations of the art curriculum.

Violet has encountered many administrators who apparently never read the art lesson plans. Violet's perception was always that they either didn't care about the arts, or they didn't understand the purpose of the arts. Her administrator now at Rose High

School reads her lesson plans on a regular basis, a fact that she finds that very supportive and encouraging.

In addition, her current school district requires that the art lessons follow both state and national content standards for the arts. When she first began teaching, this was not the case. To reiterate, Violet's first teaching position was in an elementary school in Jackson, Mississippi, and her current position is at a high school in a satellite community of Jackson. She's in virtually the same area of the country, but attitudes about the arts are obviously different now. In the beginning, her lesson plans were not reviewed by administration. They simply wanted something in writing for art, just in case someone from the district office came by and checked. The content of lesson plans was virtually ignored. This attitude only served to marginalize the arts and its teachers.

Professional Development

Professional development activities have changed dramatically for Violet. While both she and Ron have always maintained memberships in NAEA, MAEA, LAEA, FAEA, and others, Violet's role has changed within these organizations. Violet has emerged as more of a leader/mentor in each of the organizations of which she is a member. In particular, she has mentored 22 student teachers over the past 30 years. She finds this role especially rewarding. "No one at my school makes me mentor a student teacher. No one at my school makes me do a professional workshop. Occasionally, they will ask me to do one, but no one forces me to do it. I do it, because I find it very personally rewarding."

Violet believes that at the start of a teaching career, most educators are very hungry. They have a mindset of "take, take, take." Violet sees this attitude as a survival tactic. Most teachers want to attend as many workshops, meetings, and professional development activities as possible because they need all of the information they can possibly obtain in order to survive in the classroom. There is a natural progression, as Violet sees it, from just surviving in the classroom, to a position of giving back to the school, students, and peers. This survival mode perceived by Violet in beginning teachers was confirmed by the Karge (1993) study reviewed in Chapter 2. This study also found that most teachers do indeed progress over time to a place of giving back, as mentioned by Violet.

School Environment

At times, surviving in the classroom has taken on a much more literal meaning at Violet's school. Violence has assumed much more of a presence at schools than ever before, and Violet's school is no exception. The year before Violet began teaching at Rose High School there was a shooting on campus. Security and safety on campus became much more of an issue. Now, school officials are much more aware of securing school boundaries, allowing strangers to visit campus during school hours, and preparing both teachers and students for emergency situations.

> We have all kinds of safety precautions now. If there is a code ring on the bell or we get a certain message on the intercom, we're supposed to go into lockdown. That means, all of the rooms are locked and no one goes in or

> comes out, unless a certain slip of paper is slipped under your door. There are many coded procedures that we all have to learn if there is an invader at the school, for example. We never would have done anything like that 30 years ago. We also have a police officer on campus for the entire school day.

Violet is normally not fearful of students. A few, though, have made her slightly uneasy. An example was one student who dropped out of school several years ago. He was gone for a year or two and then he returned to Violet's classroom. She asked him why he came back. He told Violet that he had moved to Texas, dropped out of school again, and subsequently had obtained employment. Things apparently went from bad to worse for this student, however, while he was on the job. "He said he had assaulted his boss with a wrench and was asked to leave the state of Texas." This student was once again, attempting to finish school in Violet's classroom in Mississippi. She hears stories like this from students often now. Although, she is wisely cautious with these students, she strives to not allow these students to adversely affect the learning environment in her classroom. To reiterate, 32 years ago very few acts of violence were either recalled or enacted on high school campuses, based on Violet's experiences.

World Events and Their Impact on the Art Classroom

The international trauma of the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington impacted even the students at the relatively remote Rose High School in central Mississippi. Violet turned the television on in her classroom and all of her

students watched the World Trade Centers collapse together. The class talked about the events as a group. They were visibly upset. Violet wanted the students to feel as though her classroom was a safe place to both view and talk about these tragedies. Even though the events occurred far from home, the students still felt impacted. "I've always felt like a mother to those children. In today's world it seems even more important that they feel safe in my classroom, are tolerant of one another, and treat each other with respect. Those things have always been emphasized in art class."

Technology

Technology, as mentioned earlier, is viewed by Violet as more of a new communication tool to explore rather than a dramatic change in the nature of art itself. Like many older educators, Violet has had some difficulty in learning new programs and in utilizing technology in her classroom. This difficulty is due primarily to the fact that the school lacks funding for sufficient hardware and software applications that would be necessary to teach these concepts to her students. Instead of introducing Photoshop or Corel techniques to her classes, for example, Violet has implemented some technology in her presentations. Rather than changes to the nature of art itself, she views technology as an enhancement tool to her classes. PowerPoint presentations have become very useful. This technology is something that she could not even imagine thirty years ago. Violet gives a good example:

> I've been teaching mask-making for thirty years. Well, this week, we have a new teacher who I am assisting. One student and I got together, made the mask project, took

> about 30 digital images of the process, and made a PowerPoint of the entire process. A couple of days ago I demonstrated the project to the class. However, some people were absent, some people forgot, and some of my students are special education people who don't remember things very well. In addition, the new teacher needed to review the project. So the next day, I just played the PowerPoint on the screen, which reminded everyone of the steps. I didn't have to re-demonstrate the entire process. It was a wonderful teaching tool.

Violet seems to be genuinely interested in learning more technology techniques, especially the ones that serve to streamline classroom procedures. Also, certain aspects of technology greatly aid in communication between school and home.

Technology has changed school organization, in general. The administration is consistently attempting to communicate more effectively with families and to include parents in the educative process. Thirty years ago, Violet recall that lots of parents were involved at their children's school, but now it seems that parents have to be coerced in various ways in order to participate. One way that Rose achieves this is through the scheduling of various events that are more enjoyable for the parents. The school also sends home a parent newsletter that keeps families informed of scheduled events at the school. Parents can go online and view their child's grades and progress. The parents know almost immediately if their child has missed a class, failed a test, or is missing an assignment.

Parental Support

In Violet's classrooms thirty or more years ago, unqualified support was given by the parents to the teacher. Parents consistently volunteered their time at school. Today Violet does not consider this to be true. Parents much more quickly find fault with teachers. "A parent will verbally attack a teacher as quickly as a student will. I think the parents of these students are younger and more immature than they once were. It can be rough out there."

Budgets for the Arts

Budgets for the art department have, of course, changed with time. As mentioned earlier, Violet had a very limited budget for her first ten or fifteen years as a teacher. Now, she enjoys a wonderful budget allowance for her program. Because of all of the recognition that she brings to the school, she is given virtual carte blanche for her department. She occasionally writes a mini grant if there is something extraordinary that is needed for a particular project. She admits, though, that she seldom lacks funding for anything that she requires. The clout that she currently enjoys with the school system was paid for with many years of service, however.

The Discipline of Art

Violet believes that art, itself, has changed tremendously over the past 30 years.

> Art is moving so quickly now. When I first started teaching, I would tell the students that in about 100 years,

> the world will know who the really great artists of our day are. Now, that figure has been reduced to about 20 years. I believe that soon that number will be about 10 years. Now the artists are still alive as they gain recognition. At one time, they'd have to die first.

Violet has also noticed that many of the available art textbooks are obsolete. The text that Violet uses currently only reviews art up to the 1980s. Very few of the new postmodern works are even addressed. "It's hard to know the newest thing in art, because we're always blowing the definition out of the water." A very time-honored definition of art is "order out of chaos." Many art teachers use this definition in teaching the elements and principles of design, especially to emphasize unity in a student's work. Violet classifies herself as having a more traditionalist viewpoint.

Violet's definition of art has changed relatively little in the last 32 years. She views art as an expression of an idea, but she also thinks that it must possess a foundation of good design.

> Art has to be creative; it has to be something that's your own idea; it has to be something that expresses a feeling, and it has to have good design. I try to incorporate all of those things, but I want my students to know the traditional view. I really feel that they need to know where art has been before they are qualified to throw all of the definitions out the window.

While Violet's view of art hasn't changed much over time, the art world around her has changed tremendously. In addition, her method of delivery has changed. The events of the day, the school environment, administration, parents, peers, and students themselves have all changed dramatically since 1970 as well. The one thing that has remained a constant in Violet's classroom has been her view of art itself. It is this researcher's belief that art holds such an ideal presence in Violet's mind that it will never be denigrated by any passing trend or new technique. Conversely, Violet's view of art can never be elevated either, because it is already positioned on the highest plateau it could possibly occupy in her mind.

Student Assessment

Considering Violet's lofty aspirations for her students, and her high ideals about art education, the question of assessment naturally arose. How does a master teacher assess an almost completely subjective art course? Violet's assessment strategies have changed dramatically over the years since she began teaching. The most important change occurred for her in 2001 when she underwent testing for national certification. Prior to that date, Violet's assessment techniques, self admittedly, were less than perfect. Now she understands that assessment in art must be multifaceted.

Violet gives her students multi-faceted assessments, both heavily-weighted and lightly-weighted, during the course of the completion of a single project. While her students are building techniques, the students are typically given daily check sheets, which correlate to a more lightly-weighted daily grade. Later, while working on the same project, the students are normally given an assessment rubric that will evaluate more

sophisticated progress. Their final project grade is always given a more complex rubric assessment. Violet develops several rubrics for every project she assigns. In addition, the students complete a self-assessment, a written test, and an oral class critique – all on the same project. Violet, also observes the students as they work, and sometimes includes class participation and progress on her grading rubrics.

During her classroom observations, she always converses with the students about their work. She feels it is very important that she speaks to each student, every day. "Even if it's just, 'How are you doing today?' I greet each of them everyday and say goodbye to each one every day because I want them to know that I care about them." Violet believes that conversations with her students are an integral component of assessment. Virtually all of her current assessment techniques have transitioned since 2001. The changes she has made in assessments have helped her students to understand the direction she wants them to go. Her students' grades have improved, their projects have improved, and Violet's relationships with parents are more enhanced as a result of these more intricate assessment strategies. As the students make small improvements, they are always rewarded almost immediately by the daily grading check sheets. This, immediate and positive feedback helps to both motivate and inspire the students.

Staying Motivated

Violet feels a great deal of inspiration on a personal level as well. Teaching, in Violet's experience, has changed as a profession, but for Violet teaching is the noblest of callings. She does feel compelled to seek avenues for self-motivation, which is something that was not necessarily required in the early years of her career. She does this

by constantly trying new things, attending workshops, and filling herself with intellectual pursuits that she finds stimulating. When she learns something new, she is almost always excited to bring her new knowledge back to her classroom. "You have to nurture yourself as a teacher and as an artist, or they'll (the students) drink you dry." It always helps her, too, when the students are excited about class as well.

One of the last interviews conducted with Violet was on a Friday afternoon. She appeared exhausted; and it was apparent that she'd probably had a very trying day. I experienced a tinge of guilt about the timing of the interview and I apologized for having to schedule it on a school day. When asked about her day, however, she was quick to correct my interpretation.

> Sometimes you can just feel drained. But today, I actually feel inspired. I love Friday afternoons, because I normally feel like we've achieved some good goals over the course of the week. I had one child come up to me today in 3rd period and she said, 'this is the best thing I've every done in all of my school years.' Another one told me that the activity today was the most fun thing he'd ever done. I almost cried right there. Last week, I had one student tell me that mine was her favorite class. And two weeks ago (and believe me this doesn't happen often) a student said, 'Ms. Violet you're a good teacher.' So this is my reward. They don't realize how much those things mean to me.

Unlike many teachers who suffer burnout, Violet remains energized by her vocation through self-nurturing, and through feedback from her students, the administration, her peers, and parents.

VIOLET SUMMARIZED

It is difficult to condense everything gleaned from Violet's life and teaching history into one or two concluding paragraphs. Much of the analysis of her will be reviewed in Chapter Five, in conjunction with reviews of both John and Mary. To summarize succinctly, though, during the course of our interview-time together, this researcher at once felt inspired, motivated, exhausted and inadequate. Several times during the interviews, she began to cry as she remembered certain emotional events or important people who changed the course of her life. These were endearing moments because it was apparent that she was revisiting incidents that had been meaningful to her -- events that she hadn't thought about in a long time. It was also apparent that she was being as totally honest and open as possible. While Violet's husband was a former colleague, she and I were only superficially acquainted prior to this study. Now, a warm familiarity and a common bond seemed to imbue our relationship.

One primary criticism of qualitative research has been the establishment of reliability and internal validity of the data collected. This was an ongoing concern during all of the interviews conducted for this study, but I was particularly mindful of the data collected from Violet because, at least initially, she didn't seem to make any negative comments about her teaching history. In order to establish internal validity I took several precautions: member checking, repeated interviews, peer examination, and general

triangulation of data (Merriam, 1998). In addition, documents that were collected for this study, confirmed that Violet had indeed achieved all that she implied in her interviews. The awards that she has received, the accolades bestowed on her students, and the articles that have been written about her, all confirm that she is a master teacher of the highest quality.

Violet calls herself an "encourager." This researcher views her as a coach in the classroom. She knows that all of her students have potential. Her goal is to draw out the greatest potential of each child.

While many times Violet did seem to be recalling only the positive aspects of her career, I do not believe that Violet painted herself as the perfect teacher during our time together. Many times she has felt disappointment as a teacher. Many times she has encountered discipline problems in her classroom. During her first few years of teaching, she was given only a limited amount of money and support by the administration. Initially, Violet was offered very little encouragement from her peers. Often she felt discouragement and questioned her own ability. She never once, however, considered leaving the profession.

Teaching has always been a life-calling for Violet. She persevered. Her tenacity has paid huge dividends to both her school and her current students. She is an inspiration to everyone she meets. She is an inspiration to this researcher.

This concludes the data collection segment of this study. All of the participants were open and seemingly honest with their responses to questioning. Based on the research question and the goals for the study, the interview process seemed thorough and complete. Many changes were perceived by each of the participants, and their reflections

have illuminated the art teaching experience in north Louisiana and central Mississippi. Chapter 5, which follows, summarizes the findings of the data collected, offers analyses of said data, and also generates hypotheses for future research.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

…And many a failure turns about,

When he might have won had he stuck it out;

Don't give up, though the pace seems slow,

You might succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out

…So stick to the fight when you are hardest hit

It's when things get worse that you mustn't quit!

-- (excerpt from Edgar A. Guest, 2003)

The preceding biographies reflect the life and teaching histories, and professional development of three art educators who have persistently pursued excellence in art education over the course of their careers. One common thread that ran through each of these three teachers' lives is that being a teacher is not easy; sometimes there are few rewards along the way. These three teachers have continued with their chosen professions for more than 30 years, despite mounting trends, such as those noted in Violet's biography, which show that many educators in the 21st century are leaving their teaching positions and seeking alternative occupations.

This dissertation has been guided by the primary research question: **"What are the perceptions of change of three K-12 art educators located in north Louisiana and central Mississippi, regarding their development as art teachers over the course of their careers?"** This research was initiated because of an interest in studying the

teaching experiences of art educators in the area of the country in which this researcher lives. An equal interest in discovering the changes that have occurred in the participants' art teaching experiences over the last thirty years was also a guiding force. Art education research in the United States in general and, particularly, in this area of the country is very limited. As a researcher, I felt the need to know.

In this chapter, in addition to analyzing the data for this study, certain implications for future art teacher preparation and for education in general will be addressed. A summary of my conclusions, which are elaborated upon in further detail in the following sections, are that art education preservice programs should be obligated to emphasize ongoing professional development, peer mentoring programs, and a more thorough approach to the study of current trends in art education. Positive changes in inservice programs can result in considerable changes at the elementary and secondary level.

While many notable changes were perceived by each of the teachers, some significant factors have remained relatively constant over the course of their careers. A summary of the teachers' shared perceptions, perceived changes, and this researcher's analysis and conclusions follows.

ANALYSIS

While John, Mary and Violet all shared different perceived changes in their classrooms over the course of their careers, several common themes also emerged from this study. All of the changes that were perceived by the participants and recorded in this study are condensed, summarized and attached in Appendices D, E, F and G. As the data

was analyzed, commonalities among the participants were noted. While each participant's story was unique, the commonalities held by them should assist researchers in knowing more about the career practices of art educators. These commonalities have piqued an interest for further research. Of particular interest, for example, is interviewing some of the participants' former students in order to analyze the ultimate impact that each of the teachers had on their students, as was the case in Tom Barone's 2001 study. In addition, a broader study of more art teachers in this area of the country would further validate (Stake, 1995, p. 113) the data collected for this study, and would perhaps, offer even more perceived changes.

COMMON, UNCHANGING THEMES

Traditional, Flexible, Innovative

John, Violet and Mary are all passionate art educators. They have each been committed to their occupations of choice for an average of thirty years. They were each chosen as subjects of this study primarily because of their years of service and commitment to art education. This dissertation was principally concerned with change over the course of an art teacher's career. Years of service, therefore, was a significant criterion for the choice of subjects. It was noted during the course of this study that the trend with many educators is to leave the profession altogether (Karge, 1993). Violet spoke of the mentoring program at her school, aimed at transitioning young teachers through the first, few, transitional years of teaching, in order to reverse this trend. The fact that the three subjects of this study have been teaching for an average of thirty years

or more, and continue to teach, is a testament to their passion and love of art education, and the children they mentor.

All three of the subjects of this study are basically traditionalists. Each grew up with mentors themselves who emphasized studio techniques, basic drawing skills, and western European art history. The school systems in which they teach dictate conservatism, although each of their artistic natures seem to have a desire to break out of the traditionalist mold.

Limitations like these have been dealt with in similar ways by each of the subjects. John, being a conformist at heart, got along well with his administration, no matter how many times it changed, but found creative ways to raise money for his program. John was called a *creative rebel* at one point in this study because he essentially shaped his own way. John's background in graphic design dictated his early directives, but a developed love of pottery, and worldwide technological advancements in the 1990s instigated innovative changes in his art classroom. Violet, one of the most honored teachers in the history of Rose High School, has gained enormous respect from both regional and state administrators because of her students' studio achievements and her participation at the national level of her profession. At the same time, through innovative and creative techniques she has raised awareness for the arts in her area of the state, like no other art educator before her. Mary follows every rule set down for her program, but scavenges weekly for new materials for her students. While her program of study is based on traditional DBAE techniques, her work with Arts Quest has transformed the perception of the importance of the arts in her community.

Flexibility is an ever-present characteristic of these three art educators. New state mandates and administrative changes at the local, regional, and national level have dictated that art educators remain flexible, but at the same time possess a certain degree of conformity. John, Mary and Violet have all three endured mandated changes to art education, but the basic integrity of their curriculum has been unaffected.

Traditionalists with an injection of innovation and a flexible temperament can describe all three participants of this study. The term, artist, connotes someone who possesses a certain skill or area of expertise accompanied by a degree of cunning and guile (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1994). The data analyzed for this study has shown that John, Mary and Violet are all three artists in every sense of the word.

Champions for Art Education

Throughout this study, an underlying, unspoken theme emerged. The three subjects of this study believe that art education will always need to be defended. This defensive attitude, common among art educators, and possible solutions to the problem are elaborated upon in Ulbricht (2009) in Chapter 2. John, Violet and Mary all addressed this concern in their own way.

Mary discussed, at length, one of her first teaching positions at the middle school level in which her administrator gave her an ultimatum. He essentially told her if she could not turn the art program around in one year, the art program at their school would be eliminated. Enormous pressure was placed upon Mary, as a very new teacher, to prove to her principal the importance of art. Mary's efforts with Arts Quest were instigated as a means by which to show the community the unique contribution that art

education can make to the life and well-being of a child. Mary was also instrumental in initiating the Gifted and Talented program in Ouachita Parish, a program which recognizes and nurtures students with special talents.

John called art "the footprint of our entire generation. It will tell future generations what we were about and who we were as human beings." As this quote so succinctly states, John is always aware of the legacy of art education.

Violet and her husband, together, are arguably the most preeminent art educators in the state of Mississippi. Violet has served in almost every position of authority on the Mississippi Art Education Association. Her awards and honors speak for themselves. In her life history, Violet stated that even though she and her husband had lived in several more prosperous areas of the country, they both felt the need to "give back" to Mississippi. One of her most driving desires was to bring art education to the forefront in her home state.

The three participants in this study all understand the tenuous status of the arts in many school districts. Particularly in the current economic atmosphere of massive budget cuts, they have each seen the arts relegated to practical non-existence. John, Violet and Mary also have seen the positive impact that a quality art program can have on a school curriculum as well. They are all three champions of the *cause*.

Champions for students

Another common theme of the participants in this study is that they are each devoted mentors of their students. Each of the subjects remembered certain students, and the impact that art had on their lives. Any student, who showed an interest or a particular

talent in the classroom, was given added attention by John, Mary and Violet. Their students taught them as much about the art education experience as any of their formal education ever did. Once again, this theme has never changed since the beginning of each of their careers. The students have always come first.

Both Violet and Mary are persistently seeking ways to teach to differing learning styles in the classroom. Mary feels the desire to separately mentor those students deemed gifted and talented because she wants to challenge them to ever-expanding and thought-provoking projects. Violet, in her quiet and almost serene way, works on a daily basis at Rose High School with students who are considered at-risk. She is apparently a calming force in these students' lives. After having worked at many different schools over the course of her career, she finds her current position the most rewarding.

John pointed out a few outstanding students, but candidly felt that because of his own selection process, all of his students were special and warranted all of his efforts. John also knew that many talented students in his school district could not afford the supplies necessary to be an art student. He gave up his lunch hours and his after school time for many years in order to open a concession stand that raised money for his art department. Through his efforts, he was able to supply paint and canvas to his students, new equipment for his pottery studio and digital imagery area, as well as fund the prize money for his annual high school arts exhibition. These exhibitions ultimately made his high school art department one of the finest in the state.

COMMON SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

John, Mary and Violet all mentioned significant changes in their art classrooms over the last thirty years. Many of those changes were common to all three, and are summarized in Appendix G of this study. Some of the changes were not noticed by all, but were still significant factors in assessing the state of art education in north Louisiana and central Mississippi today.

Technology

Technology was an important change that was mentioned often during the interview process. The world has changed dramatically with the advent of the computer. The most significant changes in technology have occurred over the past 30 years and have transpired during John, Mary, and Violet's tenures as art educators. For all three, learning new computer techniques has been a challenge. The basic function of the school has transitioned from handwritten lesson plans to digital presentations and electronic grading. Communication between parents and teachers and parents and administrators is now conducted almost exclusively through email.

Art itself has changed as technology has evolved. Many of the three participants' students are now involved in digital imagery exercises including graphic design applications like Photoshop and Illustrator. John, in particular instituted a digital photography component to his art classes. He obtained digital cameras, a computer, software, and an ink jet printer for his classroom during the mid-1990s. The students checked out the cameras during the course of the school day and shot pictures around campus. In this way he was able to limit the money he spent on equipment. John is the only one of the participants who introduced a formal digital imagery component to his

curriculum. Mary received some funding for a photography workshop for her students, and it was very successful, but temporary. Her school has one computer lab to which she currently does not have access. Mary sees this lack of access to the computers as an obstacle she will have to overcome in order to pursue any digital imagery exercises. Violet expressed an interest in digital imagery, but to date she has not found a pocket in her budget through which to fund such an enterprise. Violet does not see this as a priority at the moment, although she is hopeful of offering digital photography on a limited basis to her senior students next year. Violet's and Mary's lack of enthusiasm about the inclusion of technology in their art curricula seems to be confirmed by the NAEA 2001 survey of 672 art educators from across the country, which was reviewed in Chapter 2. This study found that fewer art teachers from the southeast part of the country participated in technology-based professional development activities. This data would seem to indicate less interest among these educators in technology as an art medium. Violet did recently receive funding for new ceramics studio equipment.

While all of the participants mentioned technology as one of the most significant changes in their classrooms, this research would suggest that technology was merely a superficial change. After analyzing the data from this study, a conclusion can be drawn that the introduction of the computer to the learning environment did alter the mechanics of learning, but the basic art curriculum changed very little.

John, Mary and Violet all learned email, electronic lesson plan filing, electronic progress reports, PowerPoint, and digital photography. These techniques streamlined much of the paperwork involved in running a school. Parents were updated on their student's progress almost daily, grades were posted digitally, and lessons were delivered

through digital imagery and projection. These were all significant changes in classroom organization and management, and they all impacted John's, Mary's and Violet's daily routine. These technological changes did little to affect the curriculum content of any of the three art educators, however. Essentially, they all three believe that an art curriculum should be composed of a studio art activity, an art history lesson generally based on a canon of western European art, an aesthetics discussion, and a critique – all the same curriculum components that were introduced to the field of art education more than 30 years ago.

Students and Their Parents

Changes in student attention span and parental support were also common themes among the three. All three subjects commented on their current students not possessing the attention span that students of thirty years ago possessed. Both Violet and Mary targeted the home environment as the source of this problem. John simply thought there were too many other distractions for students today, including too much technology. All three subjects linked a lack of attention and interest to parental involvement.

Mary has noticed that parents seem to be the instigators of a lack of responsibility among her students. Parents, she thinks, want the teacher to do "everything" for the students. Mary also cited the state mandated 504 student designation as a crutch that some parents and students lean on too heavily. Students who are deemed attention deficit, among others, receive this designation. In Mary's opinion, both the students and their parents need to take a greater responsibility in their education. Violet mentioned that many of her students today are not getting the attention at home that they need. She

thinks parents today are younger, and thus might lack the level of maturity that parents in general once had.

Administration

Changes in the attitudes of administrators were also mentioned by all three subjects. Violet and Mary felt that most of their administrators were skeptical about art initially. With time, however, and a lot of hard work, both Mary and Violet were successful in winning over the administration. John noticed changes in administrator's attitudes, but never felt that his position was threatened. He felt that his program was relatively strong and, more importantly, warranted by the administration from the very beginning. According to John's history, and considering the physical confrontations that were occurring on the campus during that time, the administration may have felt a heightened level of security with the presence of a positive, male role model on campus.

A level of frustration was noticeable, particularly from Mary, when the administration at her school was discussed. She, apparently, has encountered more opposition to her program than the other two participants. Mary's frustration was hypothecated in Chapter 2 of this study, along with a related anticipation of a lack of funding for and insufficient space requirements for art programs. The Milbrandt (2002a) study reviewed in Chapter 2 confirmed that teachers do require a substantial support system in order to function at their best. While Mary's program has received many awards, she still feels a stronger need to defend it. This researcher's assessment of this characteristic is that Mary has always defended art education, and will continue to do so,

well beyond her own retirement. Mary would seem to make an excellent, future arts advocate.

Of the three subjects, both Violet and John seemed most content with the relationship that they have established with the administrators at their school. The overall consensus of the three subjects seemed to be that while administrators, in general, have a relatively poor attitude about the value of the arts in the curriculum, a gifted art teacher with a visionary program can change any administrator's opinion. In other words, all three contend that administrators need to be educated about the positive possibilities that an exemplary art program can provide their school.

Curriculum Content

One of the most prevailing questions of this study was whether or not art teachers in this area of the country were moving toward more contemporary practices in their classrooms. Were some of the most veteran teachers in the area making the transition to postmodern curriculum content, or were they continuing to teach the standard concepts they had learned thirty years ago?

All three participants continue to utilize DBAE techniques in their classroom. Although John was aware of DBAE and incorporated it in his curriculum, he was less attached to the formal concepts of DBAE than Violet and Mary. Probably because Violet was trained by Getty Center educators in the 1980s, of the three she continues to be the most attached to DBAE. However, Violet and her husband, Ron, were also two of Mary's most influential mentors, and this fact likely accounts for much of Mary's reliance on DBAE today. The La Porte, Speirs, & Young (2008) study referred to earlier

found that most art educators in the country today do indeed continue to rely on DBAE. This study (La Porte, et.al., 2008) also found that DBAE has evolved nationally to include a more postmodern slant.

When asked about VCAE, CBAE, multiculturalism, or gender studies, for instance, all three replied that they participated in community service and studies of different cultures through DBAE but, in keeping with the mandates of their school boards, were left with very little time for anything new in the curriculum. In this researcher's opinion, none of the three participants were receptive to any new, postmodern curriculum theories. It should be mentioned that many of the aforementioned postmodern theories are not considered new by many. In fact multiculturalism, CBAE, and VCAE have been a part of the greater art education community since the mid-1990s. Many art educators have found ways of shifting their established curricula toward more contemporary strategies, through, for example studies of living, local artists, and/or student-generated community projects. A variety of examples of age-appropriate and postmodern-laden classroom approaches are available in Gaudelius & Speirs (Eds., 2002).

It was also evident that, with the possible exception of Violet who mentioned that her husband taught many of these newer theories to his art education students, none of the participants were comfortably familiar with postmodern theory. In fact, both Mary and John seemed totally unfamiliar with, for example, the terminology of visual culture or gender studies. They have all three found a comfort zone in their classrooms after so many years of teaching; they have all three achieved a level of support from their administrators; and they have all three met with a great deal of success in their programs.

The general consensus was, "Why change anything now?" I was reminded of Virginia Richardson's 1998 article that stated, "Teachers don't change. They resist change. They just get in a groove of doing what they have always done and what they are comfortable with."

Richardson (1998) did ultimately conclude, however, that some teachers do indeed change on a regular and voluntary basis. Most teachers are reluctant to make changes, however, that are mandated from administrators and/or school boards. The three participants of this study, John, Violet, and Mary, have made gradual changes in their classrooms. Violet is well aware of VCAE, through her work with the National Art Education Association, and through the research efforts of her husband. She emphasized that she appreciates the merits of VCAE, but feels that at the high school level, the students need a more disciplined approach. Mary has incorporated community-based projects into her curriculum. All three recognize the need for continued professional development, however.

John, Mary and Violet have all three continued to introduce new, albeit traditional, studio techniques and art history lessons to their students. They are all interested in learning new art methods, and continue to attend workshops and further their research to this end. These new lessons are all introduced in the format of DBAE, however. While DBAE has transcended beyond more traditional formats like Lowenfeld or European formalism, and is not considered the most traditional format available to educators, some researchers consider it an outdated approach (Fehr, 2000). The national survey of art educators, conducted by La Porte, Speirs, and Young in 2008 and reviewed

in Chapter 2 of this study, indicated that John, Mary and Violet fall well within the national norm of educators who prefer DBAE content standards, however.

Professional Development

All three participants were cognizant of the fact that professional development activities are crucial in order to stay abreast of the newest and best information in the field. As mentioned in the literature review in Chapter 2 of this study, the NAEA 2001 survey found that most art educators agree that professional development activities are crucial to their development. While art teachers from the southeast area of the United States participated at a lesser rate with regard to technology-based instruction, they remained committed to the professional development experience in general. All three participants have remained active in professional organizations including The National Art Education Association, The Louisiana Art Education Association, and The Mississippi Art Education Association. In addition, Violet has maintained her memberships in three different state art education associations and has made presentations at all three. She has also presented at the NAEA, and held offices at both the state and national levels. John, early in his career, was a regular presenter at the LAEA. All three subjects continue to participate in various workshops in order to learn new creative techniques to pass on to their students.

Each of the participants increased their professional development activities over the course of their careers, because they all understood the importance of delivering current information to their students. Even though Mary is not as active in state and national organizations as John and Violet, she continues to pursue new studio techniques

through attending various workshops. This common characteristic of enthusiasm for current concepts, however, seems to have either peaked at mid-career or been limited to a more conservative curriculum, because all three participants continue to rely on traditional studio practices in their classrooms.

In addition, they all three agree that participation in professional development activities has aided in establishing a greater degree of legitimacy to each of their art programs. Through the support John, Mary and Violet have gained from participation in national and state arts organizations, they are all compelled to advocate art education in their school systems.

Peers

Each of the participants expressed concern that new art teachers entering their school systems are not as well-prepared as teachers once were. Whether this apparent lack of preparedness is misperceived, the result of irresponsibility on the part of the new teachers or simply inadequate preservice teaching regimens was unclear and varied among the participants. Mary thought many of the new teachers at her school were not as responsible as the more veteran teachers. Violet believed that veteran mentors could aid new teachers in overcoming first-year apprehensions. This idea was confirmed by Karge (1993) who found that attrition among new educators could be avoided with the intervention of veteran mentors and university professors. John was concerned that many of the current art teachers at his school are less enthusiastic than he had been in his early years of teaching. Although no research was found indicating that beginning art teachers are less enthusiastic than they once were, the Sabol (2006) study did conclude that

educators in the south and educators in smaller school systems were less likely to participate in professional development activities. According to the participants of the Sabol (2006) study, this consistent professional development participation was important in maintaining interest and enthusiasm for their profession.

All three participants were highly influenced by early mentors. John, Mary, and Violet all were impacted by gifted teachers at both the high school and college level. Early mentors have been documented as being highly influential to many art educators (Raunft, (Ed.), 2001). This early influence ultimately impacted each of the participants' relationships with their peers.

The Discipline of Art

The three participants of this study all acknowledged that the discipline of art has changed dramatically over the past 30 years. Art has moved from Modern to Contemporary, to Postmodern, to Deconstruction, to Hyperreality, all since 1970 (Hurwitz & Day, 2001). When questioned, all three subjects expressed the need to address more contemporary art forms in their classrooms. All three believed that their students would be interested in a study of more contemporary artists. Both Mary and Violet felt a certain level of frustration with the art textbooks that are currently available. Violet stated that the textbook that her class uses only covers up to about the 1990s. Mary was dismissive of the idea of introducing postmodern concepts in her classroom. She expressed concern over the lack of time during the course of the semester. She seemed unwilling to consider eliminating any of her current lesson plans in lieu of introducing new concepts. Suggestions for this dilemma could be taken from Milbrandt

(2002b), who admits that, “Due to the need to meet district, state, and national standards that reflect a broad content area in the visual arts, it could be argued that an entire curriculum devoted to contemporary art may not be possible or desirable...” However, Milbrandt (2002b) calls postmodernism “a critique of society,” and argues that it “provides logical content for instruction that is personally and socially meaningful.” Integration of postmodern lesson plans with more traditional DBAE studies can be achieved in very practical ways as evidenced by the Milbrandt model (2002b, p. 319). In addition, many other arts researchers have addressed the idea of integration of postmodern thought within the realm of the traditional curriculum (Gaudelius & Speirs, Eds., 2002) (Noble, 2006).

Art has moved from a modern approach in the 1970s to a postmodern era. Hurwitz and Day (2001) define postmodernism in art as a “collective name for a multiplicity of philosophical stances and theories.” While a label for the twenty-first century trends in art is debatable, most art historians agree that our current period can generally be labeled postmodern, within which several subheadings can be delineated. John, Mary, and Violet all agree that the new postmodern era has produced a wide range of ideas. As with many other art educators today, the three teachers who participated in this study expressed the need to at least encourage their students to think about the relationships between art, community, and ecology (Hurwitz & Day, 2001). Their histories suggest that they, particularly Mary and Violet, have been reluctant to introduce such postmodern relationships in their classrooms because of what they perceived as “undisciplined techniques.”

John, Mary and Violet have seen the need to involve their students in multicultural studies and community awareness. However, the multiculturalism addressed in their classrooms does not seem to target the cultures of the local community, which is one of the hallmarks of an effective multicultural curriculum. According to Anderson (1991), "Multicultural art education can enable students from various backgrounds to generate ideas and symbols that reflect their own cultural beliefs, experiences, and environments." In addition, Efland (1990) points out that, "If art is not about each student's experience, what is it about?" In other words, an effective multicultural curriculum should possess a relevant and more personal social and community context. While John, Mary and Violet all mentioned that their students were personally affected by social and political events like the Vietnam War, Hurricane Katrina, and racial tensions in the community, none of their formal art curricula addressed these concerns.

John's high school art program seemed to transition to contemporary trends more smoothly than Violet's and Mary's. While the concept had not been completely defined in the 1990s, John's use of computer technology and digital photography in his classroom emphasized the postmodern condition of hyperreality. "Hyperreality utilizes new forms of literacy that do not depend on traditional modes of learning but, rather, on proficiency in the use of multiple forms of media" (Hurwitz & Day, 2001).

In addition, John and Violet continue to pursue their careers as professional artists. Each exhibits original works of art on a regular basis. Mary has admittedly neglected her own art work because of a lack of time. Violet co-creates works of art with her husband. John is represented by two galleries, exhibits regularly at fine craft shows,

and continues to produce original works of art on a regular basis. He is currently creating fused glass jewelry in addition to pottery. This research has shown that teachers/mentors who continue to create their own work seem to have a greater impact on their students than those who no longer create.

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation has been guided by the primary issue question: **What are the perceptions of change of three K-12 Louisiana and Mississippi art educators regarding their development as art teachers over the course of their careers?**

John, Mary and Violet believe that they have changed in primarily positive ways as art teachers over the past 30 years. Each feels that personal improvements were made in the areas of discipline in the classroom, professional development, rapport with parents, rapport with students, and their knowledge of the discipline of art (Appendix G). This was not a surprise. I expected to find that these veteran teachers felt that their years of experience in the classroom had improved their teaching ability.

The changes at each of their schools that were most often mentioned by John, Mary and Violet were: the use of technology, changes in the level of responsibility exercised by individual students, changes in the perception of the arts, parental support, administrative support, and budget changes. All three noted a heightened level of security at each of their schools due in part to social and political events. The daily management of the school has also changed dramatically due to the addition of computer technology.

None of the participants have significantly changed their curricula in the last 30 years. They are basically all utilizing DBAE and the curriculum content that they were taught in college. This was not unexpected. Considering that when Violet and Ron arrived in north Louisiana from Florida in the early 1990s, and few educators in this area of the country were utilizing DBAE techniques, it is not surprising that this region might be behind the national standard. The La Porte, Speirs, & Young (2008) study would suggest otherwise, however. This study (La Porte, et.al., 2008) concluded that on a national level, most art educators continue to utilize DBAE in their classrooms.

Both Mary and Violet have noticed a significant change in the level of responsibility of their students. At one time, students were apparently more self-sufficient. Both subjects perceive that this change is attributable to changes that have occurred in the home environment. More specifically, Mary and Violet mentioned that the widespread national media influence that has compounded over the last 30 years has had a negative impact on education. Both Mary and Violet perceive that those students who have been exposed to more media and less personal attention at home, have a shorter attention span and show less responsibility at school. They both mentioned that these problems can arise if parents do too much for their students, or, if they do too little.

All three of the participants felt very strongly that a non-supportive community or administration could be swayed by the concerted efforts of a strong art program and an effective art educator. They each felt that their early careers were marked with unsupportive administrators, who eventually became champions for art education.

IMPLICATIONS

Based on the analysis of John, Mary, and Violet, changes come slowly in art education in Louisiana and Mississippi. John, Mary, and Violet, like many other teachers, have been reluctant to change teaching strategies and curricula (Richardson, 1998) that, in their opinions, have had long-term success. While all three have enjoyed personal, positive, professional development, their curricula have not evolved to the degree that the wider art education research community has advocated. All three are continuing to utilize DBAE in their classrooms, an art education strategy that has been perceived as antiquated (Fehr, Fehr, & Keifer-Boyd, 2000) by many. While their intentions seem to be good, and all three have expressed a desire to bring a degree of postmodernism into their art classrooms, they have only achieved this on a limited basis, if at all.

This slowness to change is not exclusive to north Louisiana and central Mississippi, however. As mentioned earlier, according to Richardson (September, 1998), many teachers are reluctant to implement changes in their classrooms. Most educators establish a routine in their classroom that works for them and then continue that routine on an uninterrupted basis unless otherwise mandated to do so. When changes do occur, teachers are more willing to implement those modifications if they are self-imposed changes rather than edicts from above. Reiterating this point, Duncum (2002) refers to change in education as "always incremental."

The technological changes that have occurred in the art classroom have been palpable. All three subjects have made significant changes in their lesson delivery, their classroom management and organization, and in their modes of communication with students and parents, due, in large part, to the dramatic changes in technology over the

past 30 years. With the exception of John's use of digital photography and computer graphics at his high school, however, the technological changes noted by each educator would seem to be tertiary rather than primary. Technology, rather than being utilized as a new art medium, is viewed as a more streamlined approach to classroom management by the participants.

The perceived changes that have been noted by John, Mary, and Violet are worthy of review. They are indicators of a general climate of change, albeit slow change, in north Louisiana and central Mississippi art classrooms. All three participants discussed the pride that they felt in the impact that their art programs have had on the community at large. This impact was non-existent 30 years ago.

Implications for Art Teacher Education

While John, Mary and Violet all perceived dramatic changes in their classrooms over the last three decades in at least one important area, their histories reveal otherwise. In the area of curriculum development, very little has changed. Both Mary and Violet, whose early educations were steeped in DBAE techniques, have continued utilizing the same basic curricula over the last 30 years. Not only are they continuing their loyalties to DBAE, both believe that this is still the most effective approach to art education. John, whose background was in graphic design and ceramics, was only introduced to DBAE concepts through his professional development participation. DBAE was something John knew about, and generally used, but a concept to which he did not seem to be strongly committed. His introduction of the computer as a new art medium to his high school students in the 1990s, indicated more of a willingness to consider new approaches in his

classroom. As reviewed in this research, many art education researchers, particularly in the last 10 years, have argued that DBAE is an antiquated approach (Fehr, Fehr, & Keifer-Boyd, 2000) (Smith, 2003), or at the very least should be modified to a better fit for the 21st century art classroom (Gaudelius & Speirs, Eds., 2002) (Noble, 2006). While a moderate transition to a more contemporary, postmodern approach is espoused by many, several authors have argued that DBAE and contemporary art education are totally incompatible, since DBAE is based on the notions of the established canon of European art, and contemporary art and education is considered pluralistic, collaborative, and places more emphasis on the needs of the community and the input of everyday citizens (Smith, 2003, and Duncum, 2002). This research also indicates that the subjects of this study changed their ideas about the art curriculum very little from their first year of teaching to their 30th year. While this appears to be the national norm (La Porte, Speirs, & Young, 2008), the Richardson (1998) study and Duncum (2002) essay also indicated that, in general, teachers are very reluctant to change.

This research has shown that art education students should be introduced to more contemporary issues at the preservice level (Weitz & Suggs, 2000) (Henry & Lazzari, 2007). Administrators, students, state and federal mandates, peers, and the school environment all changed around John, Mary and Violet, but their basic art curriculum has never changed. This fact seems to indicate that preservice teacher education should change in order to effect positive changes in the curriculum over time. The art curriculum that the three teachers in this study learned in their respective university art programs is the one they continue to teach today. It appears that preservice art education

preparation programs may be the crucial key in the development of more postmodern thought in future art classrooms.

Art education professionals, in today's research environment, should feel an obligation to introduce their students to postmodern art and activities. This research has shown that ideas like Feminism, Multiculturalism, Visual Culture Art Education and Community-based Art Education (Gaudelius & Speirs, Eds., 2002) are all relevant and applicable to every child's artistic development. Weitz and Suggs (2000) call on art educators to use "guerrilla tactics" in order to make changes in the curriculum. They say this fundamental change in the art curriculum is a battle, and that all art teachers should ask themselves if they are "prepared to be lifelong learners?" Violet and John seem to be most interested in learning new studio strategies for their classrooms. Violet indicated that learning new techniques served to keep her motivated and excited about her profession.

If a total immersion in more contemporary issues is not practical, preservice art educators should at least consider an integrative approach. It would seem that a more integrative approach can be achieved in simple ways and with small steps at a slower pace. For example, Gaudelius & Speirs (2002) suggest that teachers begin to introduce postmodern thought in their classrooms through the study of more contemporary artists. The authors suggest that art teachers begin a list of contemporary artists who might be of more relevance to their students' lives. By studying more recent, and perhaps local artists, rather than relying solely on the study of western European canons of art (Fehr, 2000) who lived many years ago, art classes will holistically become more current. Even a traditional DBAE lesson plan based on a current or living artist would go a long way

toward introducing more relevant issues into the art classroom. Gaudelius and Speirs (2002, p. 400-404) offer a list of suggested artists for art teachers to begin this process.

Implications for General Teacher Education

While this research has focused on art education, a few related implications for general educators have emerged as well. No matter what their chosen field of study, teachers must be prepared to become lifelong learners (Weitz & Sugg, 2000). The world around our students is rapidly changing, and all teachers must be ready to make adjustments along the way. Just because educators learn certain concepts in preservice programs does not necessarily mean that those methods will be viable in five or ten years. "Changes, uncertainties, and challenges can be a valuable part of our teaching. Our strength enables us not only to cope with them but also to value them" (Weitz & Sugg, 2000).

To this end, professional development activities, including networking are vital to all educators. Teachers must remain in touch with new research and new strategies for the classroom. In addition, self-reflection (Grauer, Irwin, & Zimmerman, 2003; Raunft, 2001; Jaksch, 2003; Clandinin & Connelly, 1990); Ulbricht, 2009) in the form of personal journals, narratives, goal setting, and participating in further research seems to be a valuable tool for educators in general.

Implications for Professional Development

While professional development activities were cited by all three participants as being important to their remaining abreast of current issues in art education, none of the

participants have introduced postmodern thought in a formal way to their students. Of all three participants, Violet is the most active member of professional organizations. In addition, Violet's husband, a Ph.D. in art education, is actively involved in art education research. She acknowledges, however, that she feels art history and traditional studio activities are more important to the development of her high school art students than visual culture studies, for example. It does appear, however, that based on the histories of the three participants of this study, regular participation in national and regional conferences does indeed further the development of art educators in a positive way and should be highly encouraged. In addition to the educational benefits of such conferences, the networking opportunities seem to be highly constructive.

More specifically, Violet, John and Mary, would all benefit from consistent attendance of the National Art Education Association national convention. Through this participation, they would each be introduced to both national and international art educators, who have made the transition to more contemporary practice. Violet and her husband regularly attend the NAEA convention, due in large part to Ron's ongoing research and networking efforts. John and Mary have not attended in many years.

Having attending a recent NAEA convention, this researcher is cognizant of the fact that over one thousand lectures, super sessions, and workshops are available to educators during this five-day seminar. Most of the lectures offered are related to the most contemporary issues facing art education today. For example, the 2009 NAEA convention featured a session titled, *Globalization, Art, and Education: Super Session 2 – International and Cross Cultural Collaborations.* Some of the featured panelists were Tom Anderson, Enid Zimmerman, Doug Blandy, and Kristin Condon. These panelists

discussed the importance of introducing transcultural experiences and international collaborations in art classrooms. On a related note, the theme of the upcoming 2010 NAEA national convention is *Art Education and Social Justice* (National Art Education Association, 2010). Many art educators, particularly those located in smaller communities or rural areas of the country, would do well to move their classroom practices toward a more contemporary approach, by participation in the NAEA convention, and similar national and regional offerings.

Future Research

Further research on the state of art education internationally, nationally, and regionally is warranted. More art teachers should be studied. Considering the demographics (Monroe Louisiana Population and Demographics, 2000) of this area of the country, the African American art education experience should be explored. While few art educators in north Louisiana and central Mississippi are African American, this researcher would be interested in knowing if their experiences differ from their white colleagues.

Additional changes in the art classroom should be documented over time. The participants of this study were asked about broad changes in their classrooms. More specific changes would be of interest and should be addressed, particularly in the area of curriculum content. Concurrently, the effectiveness of current preservice art education programs could be investigated by conducting teaching histories of newer teachers who possess a possible fresher eye toward their preservice training in north Louisiana and central Mississippi.

In addition, a study of the perceived influences of John, Mary, and Violet on former art students would be an informative area to investigate. A series of interviews of former students (Barone, 2001) of all three participants would bring this research "full circle" and would perhaps aid in validating some of the perceptions highlighted by this study. Pursuing publication of this series of interviews is of particular interest to this researcher. Even though Violet's biography was lengthy, her story seemed incomplete. During the interview process, Violet relayed many poignant stories of former students. Her teaching history should be explored further and at a more intimate level. Further interviews with Violet, her husband, and her former students are areas of research that will be pursued in the future.

Other research is also being considered. For example, a study that would investigate the effects of a master art teacher on former student teachers would inform the field. Also of interest is further investigation of the researcher's journal that was instigated as a result of this study. In addition to the researcher's journal, positionality could be explored through a more detailed autobiography.

Continuing this type of research is the very charge that J. Ulbricht (2009) has called for in his essay titled, *Changing Art Education's Master Narrative through Media Narratives.* In this article Ulbricht emphasized that in the past most art educators have garnered support for their programs through student exhibitions, competitions, and community centers. This research has shown that John, Mary and Violet have also followed this pattern. All three gained administrative support and community respect through these venues, but not without many years of frustrated efforts. Recognizing this frustration, Ulbricht (2009) asserts that student exhibitions do not accurately or

completely convey the impact that art education can have on a student. He calls for art teachers to participate in arts-based research (Barone & Eisner, 1997) by reflecting on and writing about their classroom experiences. By creating narratives of their experiences, art teachers can build on the support they have gained with student exhibitions. "Only by adding to the assumed end products of art education with personal narratives can teachers expect less sympathetic observers to mobilize in such a way so art education garners a more secure place in the schools" (Ulbricht, 2009). Further narratives of art teachers' experiences are warranted in order to achieve this end.

SUMMARY

Changes have occurred in art education in three classrooms in north Louisiana and central Mississippi over the last 30 years. The three teachers whose lives were studied are unique individuals. It would be unwise to generalize or draw conclusions about the entire state of art education in north Louisiana and central Mississippi based on the results of a single study. This study has, however, highlighted some important changes that were perceived by John, Mary, and Violet over the course of their teaching careers.

As noted earlier, Stake (1995, p. 136) likens the case study to a work of art, "Finishing a case study is the consummation of a work of art. A few of us will find a case study, excepting our family business, the finest work of our lifetime." This research, however, should be considered only the beginning of a greater body of art education research to be conducted by this researcher in the future. This future research will include studies on, not only changes that art education has undergone over time, but more

narratives of art teachers' experiences. It is this researcher's expectation that future research on more art teachers' lives will serve to illuminate the field of art education and the experiences of art teachers to a broader degree.

APPENDIX A

TOM ANDERSON'S (2000) INTERVIEW GUIDE

MODIFIED BY JONI HENRY NOBLE

Where were you born and when and where did you grow up?

Tell me abut your education including elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education.

(If you haven't done so already) please describe your teacher training. How effective was it?

(If you haven't done so already) please describe your work history, including other jobs you've done, how many years you've been a teacher, and where.

What kind of certificate do you have?

What in-service training is required for you to keep your certification?

What's your salary, where do you fit in your district's salary scale, and how do you feel about your salary?

Why did you become an art teacher?

Is there a favorite teacher that you remember? Did s/he have any influence on your career?

Are you satisfied with what you do? Have you ever thought about doing something else?

What's the most rewarding/satisfying thing about being an art teacher?

What's the most frustrating thing?

Have any of these things changed with time?

Describe your school (location, size, population, special conditions, community).

Describe your art program (goals, courses taught, scope and sequence, facilities, supplies, other teachers and what they teach, number of students, how many hours a week they have art, class size, teaching load, number of periods, length of your day, homework).

Describe a typical day in as much detail as possible.

What extra duties and other non-art-related tasks are you assigned at school?

What extra art-related/professional duties do you have (art club, professional organizations, etc.)?

Do you have social or professional contact with other art teachers on a regular basis? Is there some formal mechanism for this in your district? Describe. What do you discuss?

What would be your ideal situation (class size, teaching load, facilities, focus, budget, salary…)?

Who decides what you teach (National or State Standards, district curriculum, individual choice relationships)?

Describe how any of the above have changed with time.

What's the most important thing you teach? How has this changed?

What are your long-term goals for your students? (What do you want them to take with them from their art education?)

What skills and/or concepts are most important to be taught in art?

What's the role for creativity in your program? How does it relate to skills and concepts?

Are you a practicing artist? Describe, if so. How important is that for an art teacher?

How do you motivate your students? How as this changed with time?

What do you think about (1) competitions/displays; (2) homework; (3) copy work and/or researching the work of other artists; (4) breadth versus depth approaches to instruction? Have your ideas changed with time?

What's the role of criticism, art history, and/or aesthetics in your program?

What's your position on grading (what, how, and why)? Has this changed with time?

What's more important, student attainment or student satisfaction?

Is there any student who really stands out in your mind for any reason?

Is there anything else about your philosophy of instruction that you want to tell?

Would you be willing to write a brief reflective paper that describes your philosophy of instruction or anything else about teaching on which you would like to comment?

Would you prefer to present your reflections orally, and then I will transcribe?

How important is art in society/in life? How has this changed over the years?

How important do you think art is in general education? Why?

Do kids get enough art in school? How has this changed?

What kinds of kids should take art and what kinds of art should they take?

How important and how well supported is art in your school (administrative support, non-art teacher support, community and parent input/support)? How has this changed over the years?

What would you change, if you could, to make your job better?

Would you become an art teacher again, given the opportunity to start over?

Is there anything else you'd like to say?

Would you allow me to photograph you in your classroom?

APPENDIX B
ELLIOT EISNER'S (1984, p. 3-53-3-55)
ART INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS
FROM
ART EDUCATION IN THE PALO ALTO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MODIFIED BY JONI HENRY NOBLE

How do you decide what it is that you teach in art? What kind of plans if any do you make? Is there any written material or a curriculum guide that you use or follow? Can I see it? Has this format changed with time?

The curriculum of the school in which you teach provides a range of subject for students to study. Among these subjects which do you think would be rated as most important to least important by school administrators? I am going to give you a set of cards and would you please put them in the order of their importance as perceived by school administrators in your school district? (Each card has a school subject printed on it.)

If you were to rank the order of the cards from the student's point of view, how would you order them? Would you please do so?

I would like you to assume that you had only three weeks allocated to the teaching of art in a school year. What do you think you would emphasize or devote your attention and the attention of your students to and why? That is, what would you like to accomplish in those three weeks and what would you do?

I wonder if you might elaborate on what you believe to be the educational benefits of students working in the visual arts? What are the most important things that they can get from art education?

Are there any unique contributions that you believe the visual arts make to your students education? That is, are there contributions that you believe that art makes that other subjects do not make?

Do you think that art education should be taught primarily in relation to other subjects in the curriculum or do you think it should be taught as an independent study in its own right? Could you explain why you answered the way you have?

Do you use any aids or volunteers in your classroom in the area of art education? If so, in what ways are they used?

How do you go about evaluating the art education program in your classroom and how do you determine what students are getting out of it?

I wonder if you might think about your own training in art education. Could you tell me what kind of background in art education you have, starting from college. The training

might be both formal and informal, that is university courses or other kinds of courses or programs you might have been in, if any.

Students differ in their abilities in art as they do in other areas of the curriculum. What do you think accounts for the high level ability in the visual arts that some students have?

To what extent if any does the art program in the Palo Alto (Ouachita Parish and Rose High) schools utilize community art resources to enhance the program?

One final question, art is a broad and often ambiguous term. I would like you to think about the meaning of art for a moment and then describe what you mean by art when you use the term. That is, what do you believe art to be?

Do you have a conception of how students learn in art? If so, what is it?

Have any of your ideas about the above questions, changed over the course of your teaching career? If so, please explain.

APPENDIX C
ROBERT E. STAKE'S (1995) GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING FIELD-OBSERVATION CASE STUDY
MODIFIED BY JONI HENRY NOBLE FOR
PERCEPTIONS OF CHANGE: THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, LIFE AND TEACHING HISTORIES OF THREE K-12 ART EDUCATORS LOCATED IN NORTH LOUISIANA AND CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI

1. ANTICIPATION

Review expectations and goals at the outset of the study
Consider the questions or issues already raised
Conduct a literature review
Identify the case subjects
Define the boundaries of the cases
Anticipate problems that may arise with access to data
Discuss ethics and/or legality of using photographs or videotapes of teachers and/or student with my committee members **(Obtain IRB approval)**
Consider who my audience will be
Form an initial plan of action
Define what my role will be as observer on site (teacher, mentor, artist, researcher

2. FIRST VISIT

Arrange preliminary access, negotiate plan of action, arrange regular access
Write a formal agreement indicating obligations for observer and for host
Refine access rules with the people involved including the principal and school board involved.
Review real or potential costs of the study
Discuss arrangements for maintaining confidentiality of data, sources, reports – **A pseudonym was used for each participant. Digital files and tapes were coded with the date and a pseudonym.**
Discuss need for **participants** to review drafts to validate observations and descriptions **– Member checking was utilized for this study.**
Discuss the potential for publicity both during and following the study
Identify information and services, if any, to be offered hosts
Revise this plan of action as needed. **Most of this information was documented in the IRB.**

3. FURTHER PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEWING

Make preliminary observations for activities. Use my classroom for tryouts. **Observations were not a methodology used in this study.**
Identify informants and possible sources for particular data
Select or develop instruments or standardized procedures, if any – **Appendix A and B of this research proposal are the interview guidelines that were utilized for this study.**

Work out a record-keeping system, files, tapes, CDs, coding system, protected storage, and back-up system.
Constantly rework priorities and any problems that are encountered with sites, people, participants, etc.

4. FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTUALIZATION
Reconsider theoretical framework or issues to guide the data gathering
Learn what audience members know and what they want to know or understand
Sketch preliminary plans for the dissertation
Identify the possible "multiple realities," how people see things differently
Allocate time and attention to different viewpoints and conceptualizations

5. GATHER DATA, VALIDATE DATA
Make observations, interview, debrief informants, gather logs, use surveys, etc.
Ask each participant to contribute a reflective paper or oral history to the study
Shoot black and white photographs of the teacher/student experiences
Keep records of inquiry arrangements and activities
Select vignettes, special testimonies, illustrations
Classify raw data; begin interpretations
Redefine issues, case boundaries, renegotiate arrangements with hosts if necessary
Gather additional data, replicating or triangulating to validate key observations

6. ANALYSIS OF DATA
Review raw data under various possible interpretations
Search for patterns of data (whether or not indicated by the issues)
Seek linkage between program arrangements, activities, and outcomes
Draw tentative conclusions, organize according to issues, organize final dissertation
Review data, gather new data as needed, and deliberately seek disconfirmation of findings
Describe in detail the setting within which the activity occurred
Consider the dissertation as a story; look for the ways in which the story is incomplete
Complete a preliminary draft of the dissertation and reproduce materials for audience use
Try them out on committee members **(My supervisor has reviewed several drafts)**
Help reader discern typicality and relevance of situation as base for generalization
Revise and disseminate dissertation and materials. Talk to people
Write dissertation and defend to committee members

APPENDIX D
PERCEIVED CHANGES
JOHN

CHANGE	EARLY CAREER	MID-CAREER	LATE CAREER
COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY	None utilized	Digital photography Photoshop Classroom management Communication tool	Digital photography Photoshop Classroom management Communication Continued exploration as an art medium
POLITICAL & SOCIAL EVENTS	Vietnam Racial tensions	Racial tensions School unrest	911 Ease of racial tensions
ADMINISTRATION	Supportive	New personalities Continued support	New personalities Continued support
PEERS	Good rapport	Good rapport	Good rapport Less professional development
CURRICULUM CONTENT	Studio activities	Studio activities Some art history Some DBAE	Studio activities Some art history
STUDENTS	High interest	High interest	High interest Greater access to knowledge due to technology
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LAEA	LAEA State presentations	LAEA NAEA Arts workshops State presentations
SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT	High quality facilities	High quality facilities Increased equipment	High quality facilities Increased equipment
PARENTAL SUPPORT	Supportive	Supportive	Supportive Little change noted
BUDGET FOR THE ART DEPARTMENT	Minimal budget	Minimal budget Self generated funds	Minimal budget Self generated funds
DISCIPLINE OF ART	Modern era Highly active personal art production	Postmodern era Highly active personal art production	Postmodern era Highly active personal art production

APENDIX E
PERCEIVED CHANGES
MARY

CHANGE	EARLY CAREER	MID-CAREER	LATE CAREER
COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY	None utilized	Classroom management Communication tool	Classroom management Communication Lesson delivery
POLITICAL & SOCIAL EVENTS	None perceived	None perceived	911 Ease of racial tensions
ADMINISTRATION	Supportive	New personalities Continued support	New personalities Continued support
PEERS	Good rapport	Good rapport Less enthusiasm for teaching profession	Less enthusiasm for teaching profession
CURRICULUM CONTENT	Studio activities only	DBAE	DBAE Introduction of more contemporary artists
STUDENTS	Good rapport	Less attentive Less self discipline 504 designations	Less attentive Less self discipline Lack of responsibility Increase in 504 designations
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LAEA	LAEA Arts workshops	Arts workshops
SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT	Art from a cart Gymnasium corner None functioning sink No hot water	New art classroom	New art classroom
PARENTAL SUPPORT	Positive support	Mixed support Lack of discipline at home	Mixed support Lack of discipline at home Lack of responsibility
BUDGET FOR THE ART DEPARTMENT	Negative budget	Minimal budget Self generated supplies Self generated budget	Minimal budget Self generated supplies Self generated budget
DISCIPLINE OF ART	Modern era Continued personal pursuits	Postmodern Era Some personal pursuits	Postmodern Era Very little new work generated

APPENDIX F
PERCEIVED CHANGES
VIOLET

CHANGE	EARLY CAREER	MID-CAREER	LATE CAREER
COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY	None utilized	Classroom management Communication tool	Classroom management Communication tool PowerPoint presentations
POLITICAL & SOCIAL EVENTS	None perceived	None perceived	911 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Ease of racial tensions
ADMINISTRATION	Minimal support	New personalities Improved support	New personalities Highly supportive
PEERS	Good rapport	Noticeable attrition Lack of commitment	High attrition rate Peer mentoring In service workshops
CURRICULUM CONTENT	Studio activities Early DBAE activities	DBAE New studio activities	DBAE New studio activities More developed assessment strategies
STUDENTS	Highly motivated	Mixed motivation	Mixed motivation Less self discipline Lower attention span
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	FAEA, MAEA, NAEA	NAEA, LAEA, State officer	NAEA, LAEA, MAEA, State officer, National presentations Various studio workshops
SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT	Adequate	Improved studio facilities Heightened security	Improved studio facilities & equipment Heightened security
PARENTAL SUPPORT	Good	Mixed support	Mixed support Younger parents Less discipline
BUDGET FOR THE ART DEPARTMENT	Minimal budget	Increased budget Grants	Increased budget Grants
DISCIPLINE OF ART	Modern era Continued personal production	Postmodern era Continued personal production	Postmodern era Continued personal production

APPENDIX G
SUMMARY OF PERCEIVED CHANGES
JOHN, MARY AND VIOLET

CHANGE	
COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY	Dramatic changes in classroom management, communication tool, lesson delivery, some art medium, greater student knowledge
POLITICAL & SOCIAL EVENTS	Vietnam, racial tensions, 911, Hurricane Katrina, Jena Six, ease of racial tensions
ADMINISTRATION	Gradually improved support over time after art program proven
PEERS	Generally good rapport, less preparedness, less commitment, less professional development, high attrition rate among new educators
CURRICULUM CONTENT	Primarily DBAE, studio activities, some technology
STUDENTS	Mixed motivation, generally less disciplined, lower attention span, lack of responsibility, greater access to knowledge due to technology, increased percentage of 504 designations
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Continued participation in LAEA, MAEA, NAEA, workshops
SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT	Improved facilities & equipment, heightened security
PARENTAL SUPPORT	Mixed support, lack of discipline at home, lack of responsibility
BUDGET	Minimal, self generated, some grants
DISCIPLINE OF ART	Move from modern to postmodern concepts, personal production continues. Mary and Violet less productive

REFERENCES

About.com, a part of The New York Times Company (2008). Drawing/Sketching. Retrieved on September 14, 2008, from http://drawsketch.about.com/library/bl-thumbnail-sketching.htm

Abramson, P. R. (1992). *A case for case studies.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Alexander, R. (1980). Mr. Jewel as a model: An educational criticism of a high school art history class. *Studies in Art Education: A Journal of Issues and Research in Art Education*. 21(3), 133-144.

Anderson, T. (1991). Multicultural art education. *School arts,* 90(6), 10.

Anderson, T. (2000). *Real lives: Art teachers and the cultures of school.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Applebee, A. N. (1996). *Curriculum as conversation: Transforming traditions of teaching and learning.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Armstrong, Thomas (1994). *Multiple intelligences in the classroom.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Ashton-Warner, S. (1963). *Teacher.* New York: Touchstone.

Assertive discipline (2008). Retrieved on October 31, 2008, from http://wik.ed.uiuc.edu/index.php/Assertive_discipline

Bamberger, J., & Duckworth, E., with J. Gray & M. Lampert. (1982). *Analysis of data from an experiment in teacher development.* Mimeo, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA.

Barone, T. (2001). *Touching eternity: The enduring outcomes of teaching.* New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

Barone, T. & Eisner, E. (1997). Arts-based educational research. In R. Jaeger (Ed.), *Contemporary methods for research in education* (2nd Ed.) (pp. 73-79). Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association.

Bates, J. K. (2000). *Becoming an art teacher (1st Ed.).* New York: Wadsworth Publishing.

Bateson, M. C. (1990). *Composing a life: Life as a work in progress.* New York: Penguin.

Beattie, M. (1995). *Constructing professional knowledge in teaching: A narrative of change and development.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Berliner, D. C. (2000). Introduction in Barone, T. (2001). *Touching eternity: The enduring outcomes of teaching.* New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

Borg, S. (2001). The research journal: A tool for promoting and understanding researcher development. *Language Teaching Research, 5(2),* pp. 156-177.

Cary, L. (2006). *Curriculum spaces: Discourse, postmodern theory and educational research.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

Chalmers, G. (1996). *Cultural pluralism.* Los Angeles: Getty Institute for the Arts.

Check, E. (2000). Caught between control and creativity: Boredom strikes the art room. In D. E. Fehr, K. Fehr, & K. Keifer-Boyd (Eds.), *Real-world readings in art education: Things your professor never told you* (pp. 137-146). New York and London: Falmer Press.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (1990). In D. A. Schon, Ed., *The reflective turn: Case studies in and on educational practice.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Clandinin, D. J. & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry, experience and story in qualitative research.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Clarke, A. (1995). Professional development in practicum settings: Reflective practice under scrutiny. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 11(3),* 243-261.

Codell, E. R. (2001). *Educating Esme': Diary of a teacher's first year.* Chapel Hill: Algonquin.

Coffey, P. (1999). *The ethnographic self.* London: Sage.

Cohn, M. M., Kottkamp, R. B., & Provenzo, E. F., Jr. (1987). *To be a teacher: Cases, concepts, observations guides.* New York: Random House.

Collins, G. & Sandell, R. (1984). *Women, art, and education.* Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Collins, G. & Sandell, R. (1991, September). *Some thoughts on the politics of multicultural art education.* Paper presented at the USSEA Symposium, Columbus, OH.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher, 9(5),* 2-14.

Connors, K. E. (2000). Familiar voices and the need for reform. In D. Fehr, K. Fehr, & K. Keifer-Boyd (Eds.), *Real-world readings in art education: Things your professor never told you* (pp. 3-10). New York and London: Falmer Press.

Crotty, M. (2003). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Day, M., Eisner, E., Stake, R., Wilson, B., Wilson, M., McLaughlin, M. W., & Thomas, M. A. (1984). *Art history, art criticism, and art production: An examination of*

art education in selected school districts, volume II: Case studies of seven selected sites. Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

Degge, R. M. (1975). A case study and theoretical analysis of the teaching practices in one junior high art class. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon, Eugene, 1975). *Dissertation Abstracts International,* A36/09, p. 5750, March, 1976. Publication No. AAT-760 5157. ProQuest document I.D. 757056551.

Delacruz, E. M. (2000). Making a difference. In D. Fehr, K. Fehr, & K. Keifer-Boyd (Eds.), *Real-world readings in art education: Things your professor never told you* (pp. 11-19). New York and London: Falmer Press.

Denzin, N. (1984). *The research act.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) (1998). *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) (2003). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry (2nd Ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process.* Boston: D.C. Heath.

Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as experience.* New York: Perigee Books.

Duncum, P. (2002). Clarifying visual culture education. *Art Education, 55(3),* 6-11.

Edwards, B. (1979). *Drawing on the right side of the brain.* Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher.

Efland, A. D. (1990). *A history of art education: Intellectual and social currents in teaching the visual arts.* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Eisner, E. (1984). Art education in the Palo Alto public schools. In M. Day, E. W. Eisner, R. Stake, B. Wilson, M. Wilson, M. W. McLaughlin, & M. A. Thomas, *Art history, art criticism, and art production: An examination of art education in selected school districts, volume II: Case studies of seven selected sites.* (pp. 3-1-3-55). Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

Eisner, E. (1995). *Constructing professional knowledge in teaching: A narrative of change and development,* Foreward. New York: Teachers College Press.

Eisner, E. (2008, March 27). What education can learn from the arts: Lowenfeld lecture. Paper presented at the *2008 National Art Education Association National Convention, New Orleans, Louisiana.* Retrieved December 11, 2008, from http://www.arteducators.org/newsitem2.html

Emery, L. (Ed.) (2002). Teaching art in a postmodern world: Theories, teacher reflections and interpretive frameworks. *Modernism and Art Education.* Melbourne: The Learner.

Fehr, D. E. (2000). Introduction: Teaching as transgression. In D. E. Fehr, K. Fehr, & K. Keifer-Boyd (Eds.), *Real-world readings in art education: Things your professor never told you* (pp. xiii-xvii). New York and London: Falmer Press.

Fehr, D. E., Fehr, K., & Keifer-Boyd, K., (Eds.) (2000). *Real-world readings in art education: Things your professor never told you.* New York and London: Falmer Press.

Freedman, K. & Hernandez, F., (Eds.) (1998). *Curriculum, culture, and art education: Comparative perspectives.* Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Freedman, K. (2003). *Teaching visual culture: Curriculum, aesthetics and the social life of art.* New York and London: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Freire, P. (1990). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* New York: Continuum.

Fuller, F. (1974). *Achieving affective competencies through the teacher concerns self confrontation model of personalized teacher education.* A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Association, Chicago, IL.

Fuller, F. & Brown, O.H. (1975). Becoming a teacher. In K. Ryan (Ed.) *Teacher education, (74th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Pt. II), pp. 25-52.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences.* New York: Basic Books.

Gardner, H. (1997). *Extraordinary minds: Portraits of four exceptional individuals and an examination of our own extraordinariness.* New York: Basic Books.

Gaudelius, Y. & Speirs, P. (Eds.). (2002). *Contemporary issues in art education.* Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Gergen, K. J. & Gergen, M. M. (1991). Toward reflexive methodologies. In F. Steier (Ed.) *Research and Reflexivity.* London: Sage.

Getty Center for Education in the Arts. (1987). *Discipline-based art education: What forms will it take?* Proceedings of a national invitational conference sponsored by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts). Los Angeles, CA: William Bennett.

Gonzalez, V. (1997). Using critical thinking to stimulate in-service teachers' cognitive growth in multicultural education. *Journal of the New York State Association for*

Bilingual Education, 11, 92-119. Retrieved on November 1, 2007, from http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/nysabe/vol11/nysabe115.pdf

Gould, D. (1991). You can't. In P. R. Kane (Ed.), *The first year of teaching: Real world stories from America's teachers* (p. 126). New York: Penguin Group.

Grauer, K., Irwin, R., & Zimmerman, E. (Eds.) (2003). *Women art educators V: Conversations across time, remembering, revisioning, reconsidering.* Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Grosvenor, I. (1999). On visualizing past classrooms. In I. Grosvenor, M. Lawn, & K. Rousmaniere (Eds.), *Silences & images: The social history of the classroom* (pp. 83-104). New York: Peter Lang.

Guest, E. (2003). Don't quit. In. S. M. Intrator & M. Scribner (Eds.). *Teaching with fire: Poetry that sustains the courage to teach.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hancock, D. R., & Algozzine, B. (2006). *Doing case study research: A practical guide for beginning researchers.* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Hausman, J. (1970). The plastic arts, history of art and design: Three currents toward identifying content for art education. In G. Pappas (Ed.) *Concepts in art and education: An anthology of current trends.* London: Macmillan.

Henry, C., & Lazzari, M. (2007). Changing teacher preparation in art education. *Art Education,* 60(1), 47-51.

Hurwitz, A. & Day, M. (2001). *Children and their art: Methods for the elementary school* (7th Ed.). Orlando, Fl.: Harcourt College Publishers.

Jaksch, M. (2003). Troubling histories: School identities & autobiographical explorations. In K. Grauer, R. Irwin, & E. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Women art*

educators V: Conversation across time (pp. 144-149). Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Janesick, V. J. (2003). The choreography of qualitative research design: Minuets, improvisations, and crystallization. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry (pp. 46-79).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Janson, H. W. & Janson, A. F. (5th Ed.) (1997). *History of art for young people.* New York: Abrams.

Jena Six (2008). Retrieved on September 13, 2008, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jena_Six

Kagan, D. M. (1992). Implications of research on teacher belief. *Educational Psychologists, 27(1),* 65-90.

Kane, P. R. (Ed.) (1991). *The first year of teaching: Real world stories from America's teachers.* New York: Penguin Group.

Karge, B. D. (1993, April 12-16). *Beginning teachers: In danger of attrition.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED360 281).

Karge, B. D., Sandlin, R.A., & Young, B. L. (1993, April 12-16). *Analysis of beginning teacher concern data to restructure preservice teacher education.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED360280)

Keifer-Boyd, K. (2000). By the people: A community-based art curriculum. In D. E. Fehr, K. Fehr, & K. Keifer-Boyd (Eds.), *Real-world readings in art education: Things your professors never told you (pp. 155-165).* New York: Falmer.

Kincheloe, J. L. (2003). *Teachers as researchers: Qualitative inquiry as a path to empowerment.* London and New York: Routledge.

Klaus, C. H. (1999). *Taking retirement: A beginner's diary.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Klaus, C. H. (2000). *My vegetable love: A journal of a growing season.* Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press.

Klaus, C. H. (2003). *Weathering winter: A gardner's daybook.* Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press.

Klaus, C. H. (2006). *Letters to Kate: Life after life.* Iowa City, IA: University of Iowa Press.

Klein, S. (2003). Introduction. In S. Klein (Ed.), *Teaching art in context: Case studies for preservice art education* (pp. ix-xviii). Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Klinker, J. F., & Todd, R. H. (2007). Two autoethnographies: A search for understanding of gender and age. *The Qualitative Report,* 12(2), 166-183. Retrieved on October 15, 2007, from http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR12-2/klinker.pdf

Kowalchuk, E. A. (1999). Perceptions of practice: What art student teachers say they learn and need to know. *Studies in Art Education,* 41(1), 71-90. Retrieved on October 30, 2007, from http://www.jstor.org

La Porte, A. M., Speirs, P., & Young, B. (2008). Art curriculum influences: A national survey. *Studies in Art Education,* 49(4), 358-370.

Levin, Claudia (Producer/Director). (2001). *Only a teacher* [Television broadcast]. New York and Washington, D.C.: Public Broadcasting Service. Retrieved on May 2, 2008, from http://www.pbs.org/onlyateacher/today8.html

Levi-Strauss, C. (1966). *The savage mind (2nd ed.).* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Lofland, J. (1971). *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Louisiana Art Education Association (2008). Retrieved on April 20, 2008, from http://www.laea.net/news.htm

Louisiana Arts Content Standards (2003, June). *Standards of arts education.* Retrieved April 16, 2009, from http://www.doe.state.la.us

Louisiana Department of Education (2009). Retrieved on February 24, 2009, from http://www.doe.louisiana.gov/lde/eia/488.html

Lowenfeld, V. (1939). *The nature of creative activity: Experimental and comparative studies of visual and non-visual sources of drawing, painting and sculpture by means of the artistic products of weak-sighted and blind subjects and of the art of different epochs and cultures.* London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.

Lowenfeld, V. (1947). *Creative and mental growth.* New York: Macmillan.

Macdonald, S. (1970). *The history and philosophy of art education.* Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press.

McNeill, P. L. (1995). Verna Mary Wulfekammer at The University of Missouri: Factors affecting her career development in art education, 1928-1968. Ph.D. dissertation,

University of Missouri --Columbia, United States – Missouri. Retrieved May 1, 2008, from Dissertations & Theses: Full Text Database (Publication No. AAT-9705249).

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mertens, D. M. (2005). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods* (*2nd ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Messick, S. (1989). Validity. In R. L. Linn (Ed.), *Educational measurement* (pp. 13-103). New York: Macmillan.

Milbrandt, M. K. (2002a). Addressing contemporary social issues in art education: A survey of public school art educators in Georgia. *Studies in Art Education, 43(2),* 141-157. Retrieved on May 6, 2008, from http://www.jstor.org/pss/1321001

Milbrandt, M. K. (2002b). Elementary instruction through postmodern art. In Y. Gaudelius & P. Speirs (Eds.), *Contemporary issues in art education* (pp. 317-325). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentiss Hall.

Mitchell, C., & Weber, S. (1999). *Reinventing ourselves as teachers: Beyond nostalgia.* London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards (2007). Retrieved December 8, 2008, from http://mde.k12.ms.us/accred/2007_Edition.MS Public School Acct. Stds.pdf

Mississippi Visual and Performing Arts Framework (2003). Retrieved April 16, 2009, from http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/acad/id/curriculum/Arts/arts.htm

Monroe Louisiana Population & Demographics (2000). Retrieved April 25, 2008, from http://monroela.areaconnect.com/statistics.htm

Morehouse Parish, Louisiana (2008). Retrieved September 6, 2008, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morehouse_Parish,_Louisiana

National Art Education Association (2010). Retrieved November 5, 2010, from http://www.naea-reston.org

National Art Education Association (2001). *Art teachers in secondary schools: A national survey.* Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

National Art Honor Society (2007). Retrieved December 16, 2008, from http://www.naea-reston.org/nahs.html

National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform.* Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved January 9, 2009, from http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/risk.html

National Standards for Arts Education (2009). *Summary statement: Education reform, standards, and the arts.* Retrieved April 26, 2009, from http://www.ed.gov/pubs/ArtsStandards.html

Noble, J. H. (2006). *Integrating visual culture art education into a university art education classroom: Art education for pre-service teachers.* Unpublished manuscript, University of Texas at Austin.

On-Line Literature (2000-2009). Retrieved October 10, 2009, from http://www.online-literature.com/henry-adams/

Ouachita Parish Louisiana Fact Sheet (2005). Retrieved April 25, 2008, from http://www.westmonroechamber.org/docs/ouachita_demographics.pdf

Palmer, P. J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life.* Tenth anniversary edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Parlett, M., & Hamilton, D. (1976). Evaluation as illumination: A new approach to the study of innovative programmes. In G. Glass (Ed.), *Evaluation Studies Review, 1,* 140-157.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation methods, (2nd ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pauly, N. (2003). Interpreting visual culture as cultural narratives in teacher education. *Studies in Art Education, 44(3),* 264-268.

Pausch, R. (2008). *The last lecture.* New York: Hyperion.

Pearl Public Schools (2007). Retrieved December 8, 2008, from http://www.pearl.k12.ms

Pennsylvania Art Education Association (2007). Retrieved December 6, 2008, from http://www.paea.org/content/view/215/251/

Peshkin, A. (1985). From title to title: The evolution of perspective in naturalistic inquiry. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 16,* 214-224.

Postman, N. (1995). *The end of education: Redefining the value of school.* New York: Knopf.

Rankin County, Mississippi (2008). Retrieved December 8, 2008, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rankin_County,_Mississippi

Raunft, R. (Ed.) (2001). *The autobiographical lectures of some prominent art educators.* Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Reisberg, M. (2008). Social/ecological caring with multicultural picture books: Placing pleasure in art education. *Studies in Art Education, 49(3),* 251-267.

Relay For Life (2008). Retrieved March 14, 2008, from www.relayforlife.org/relay

Richardson, V. (September, 1998). How teachers change. *Focus on Basics: Connecting Research and Practice,* Vol. 2, Issue C. Retrieved December 19, 2008, from http://www.ncsall.net/?id=395

Rogan, J. M. (1988). *Validation of SoC questionnaire.* Unpublished paper. Western Montana College.

Roland, C. (1995). The use of journals to promote reflective writing in prospective art teachers. In L. Galbraith (Ed.), *Preservice art education: Issues and practice* (pp. 119-134). Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Sabol, F.R. (2006). *Professional development in art education: A study of needs, issues, and concerns of art educators.* Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Schiller, M., Shumard, S., & Homan, H. (1994). *Dialogue journaling with preservice art teachers: A study by three university supervisors in art education.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 372 058).

Schon, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action.* New York: Basic Books.

Schon, D. A. (Ed.) (1991). *The reflective turn: Case studies in and on educational practice,* Introduction. New York: Teachers College Press.

Schwandt, T. A. (1998). In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues.* (pp. 221-259). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schwandt, T. (2000). Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: Interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructionism. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research (2nd ed.),* pp. 189-214. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sevigny, M. (1978). A descriptive study of instructional interaction and performance appraisal in a university studio art setting: A multiple perspective. (Doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1977). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 38, 6477-A.

Shaw, K. L., & Etchberger, M.L. (1993). Transitioning into constructivism: A vignette of a fifth grade teacher. In Kenneth Tobin (Ed.), *The practice of constructivism in science education* (pp. 259-266). Washington, D.C: AAAS Press. And in R.K. Yin (Ed.), (2005). *Introducing the world of education: A case study reader* (pp. 23-32). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Smith, L. M. (1978). An evolving logic of participant observation, educational ethnography and other case studies. In L. Shulman (Ed.), *Review of research in education.* Itasca, Ill.: Peacock.

Smith, L.G., & Smith, J. K. (1994). *Lives in education: A narrative of people and ideas, (2nd ed).* New York: St. Martin's Press.

Smith, P. (1996). *The history of American art education: Learning about art in American Schools.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.

Smith, P. J. (2003). Visual culture studies versus art education. *Art Education Policy Review, 104(4),* 310-314.

Smith, R. A. (1987). *Excellence in art education: Ideas and initiatives.* Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Stafford, W. (1962). Lit instructor. *Traveling through the dark.* New York: HarperCollins. Retrieved September 1, 2008, from http://www.newsfromnowhere.com/stafford/wspoem09.html

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Stewart, M. G. (1997). *Thinking through aesthetics.* Worcester, MA: Davis Publications, Inc.

Stokrocki, M. (2007). *What is qualitative interviewing?* Retrieved October 15, 2007, from http://www.public.asu.edu/~ifmls/artinculturalcontextsfolder/qualformsarted.htm

Stout, C. J. (1995). Critical conversations about art: A description of higher-order thinking generated through the study of art criticism. *Studies in Art Education, 36(3),* 170-188.

Stout, C. J. (2002). *The flower teachers: Stories for a new generation.* Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Susi, F. D. (1995). Developing reflective teaching techniques with preservice art teachers. In L. Galbraith (Ed.), *Preservice art education: Issues and practice* (pp. 107-118). Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Tagore, R. (1997). Where the mind is without fear. In S. M. Intrator and M. Scribner (Eds.), *Teaching with fire: Poetry that sustains the courage to teach.* (p. 169). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

The American Heritage Dictionary (3rd ed.) (1994). New York: Dell Publishing.

The Ram (1973). Bastrop High School Yearbook, Volume XXVI.

Truitt, A. (1996). *Prospect: The journey of an artist.* New York: Penguin.

Truitt, A. (1982). *Daybook: The journal of an artist.* New York: Penguin.

Uhrmacher, P. B. & Matthews, J. (2005). Building his palette of scholarship: A biographical sketch of Elliot Eisner. In P. B. Uhrmacher & J. Matthews (Eds.), *Intricate palette: Working the ideas of Elliot Eisner* (pp. 1-13). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Ulbricht, J. (1999). The art of teaching: Learning from "invisible" teachers. *Art Education, 52(5),* 39-43.

Ulbricht, J. (2005). What is community-based art education? *Art Education, 58(2),* 6-13.

Ulbricht, J. (2009). *Changing art education's master narrative through media narratives.* Unpublished manuscript. The University of Texas at Austin.

U.S. Department of Education (2008). Retrieved on December 8, 2008, from http://www.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/archives.html

VSA Arts of Louisiana (2003-2007). Retrieved on December 6, 2008, from http://www.vsarts.org/x309.xml

Villenas, S. (1996). The Colonizer/Colonized Chicana Ethnographer: Identity, Marginalization, and Co-optation in the Field. *Harvard Educational Review,* 66(4), 711-731.

Vonk, J. H. C. (1995, April). *Conceptualizing novice teachers' professional development: A base for supervisory interventions.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 390 838).

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Retrieved on April 25, 2008, from http://tip.psychology.org/vygotsky.html

Wagner, T. (2003). Daring to lead (introduction). In S. M. Intrator and M. Scribner (Eds.), *Teaching with fire: Poetry that sustains the courage to teach.* (pp 167-169). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Weitz, G. M., & Suggs, M. S. (2000). A field guide for art educators: Guerilla tactics for change. In D. E. Fehr, K. Fehr, & K. Keifer-Boyd, (Eds.), *Real-world readings in art education: Things your professor never told you.* New York and London: Falmer Press.

Wheat, B. M. (2005). Creating and teaching the arts-infused curriculum: A case study of art, music, and drama in an exemplary elementary classroom (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 2005). Retrieved April 15, 2008, from http://www.lib.utexas/edu/etd/d/2005/wheatb69730/wheat69730.pdf#page=3

Wildman, T., Magliaro, S., Niles, J., & McLaughlin, R. (1990). Promoting reflection among beginning and experienced teachers. In R. Clift, R. Houston, & M. Pugach (Eds.), *Encouraging reflective practice in education,* pp. 139-162. New York: Teachers' College Press.

Wilson, B. (1984). Tight structure, discipline, and quality: Art education in Virginia Beach. In Day, M., Eisner, E.W., Stake, R., Wilson, B., Wilson, M., McLaughlin, M.W., & Thomas, M.A., *Art history, art criticism, and art production: An examination of art education in selected school districts, volume II: Case studies of seven selected sites.* (pp. 7-1-7-62). Santa Monica, CA: Rand.

Winslow, L. L. (1939). *The integrated school art program.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods, (3rd Ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zander, M. J. (2007). Tell me a story: The power of narrative in the practice of teaching art. *Studies in Art Education, 48(2),* 189-203.

Zimmerman, E. (1994). Current research and practice about pre-service visual art specialist teacher education. *Studies in Art Education,* 35(2), pp. 79-89. Retrieved on November 5, 2007, from www.http://www.jstor.org

VITA

Joni Henry Noble was born in Big Spring, Texas on June 25, 1955, the daughter of JoAnn Baker Henry and Edward Russell Henry. She attended school in Kansas City, Missouri, and San Antonio, Texas, until her family relocated to Bastrop, Louisiana, in 1968. She graduated in 1973 from Bastrop High School. She entered Northeast Louisiana University in Monroe, Louisiana, during the summer of 1972, as an art major. After one year of study, she met her future husband, married, and moved to New Orleans. For the next ten years, Ms. Noble started her family and worked to further her husband's medical practice. She re-entered school on a part-time basis in 1986, and finished her B.F.A. in studio painting in 1991. In 1992, she entered graduate school at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Louisiana, and completed an M.F.A. in studio photography in May, 1995. In 1997, Ms. Noble was given an adjunct position at Northeast Louisiana University, teaching art appreciation courses. She was also the Director of The Snyder Museum, an art and historic facility, located in Bastrop, Louisiana, during these years. In 1999, Ms. Noble was asked to begin teaching art education classes at NLU. In 2003, she was accepted to, and entered the Graduate School at the University of Texas at Austin, majoring in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in art education. She has continued to work on her degree for the past 6 years. In the meantime, the University of Louisiana at Monroe offered her a position as tenure-track Assistant Professor of Art Education, which she accepted in 2004, and continues to this day.

Permanent Address: 2010 Valencia Avenue, Monroe, LA 71201

This dissertation was typed by Joni Henry Noble